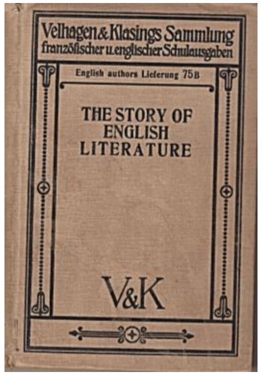
Johanna Bube



The Story of English Literature

1912

Edited by

Lidia Vianu

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Toate Istoriile care contează ca valoare nu sunt niciodată scrise din INTERIOR: ele sunt întodeauna concepute, gândite şi redactate din EXTERIOR! Cele mai bune istorii ale literaturii engleze sunt scrise de străini. Cele două pe care le publicăm aici sunt de pildă scrise şi publicate din Germania.

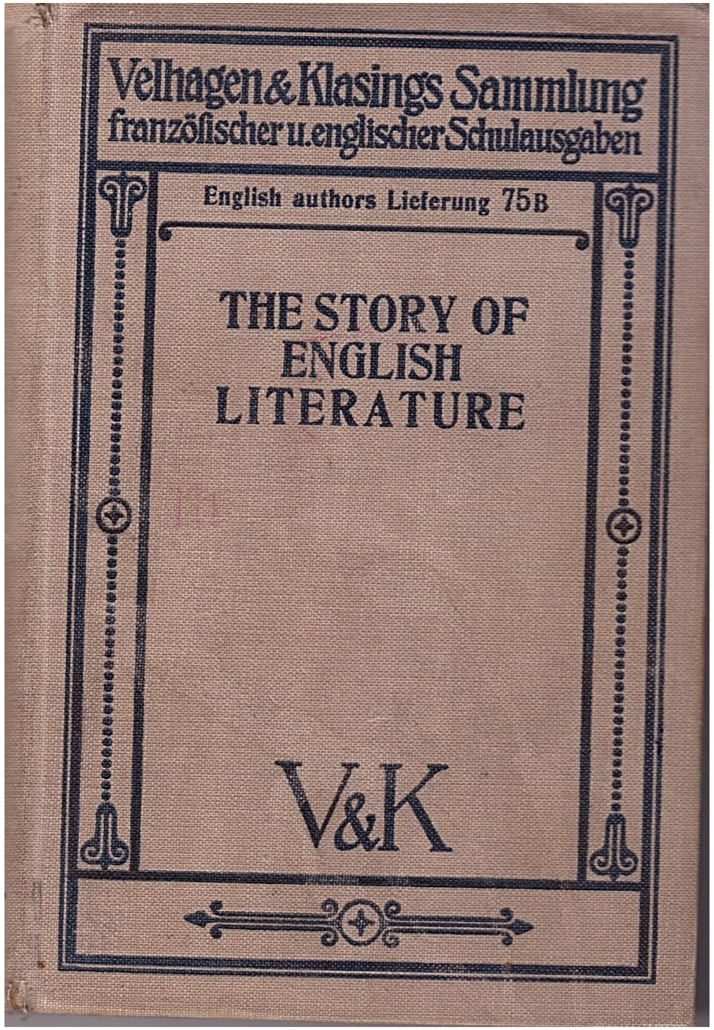
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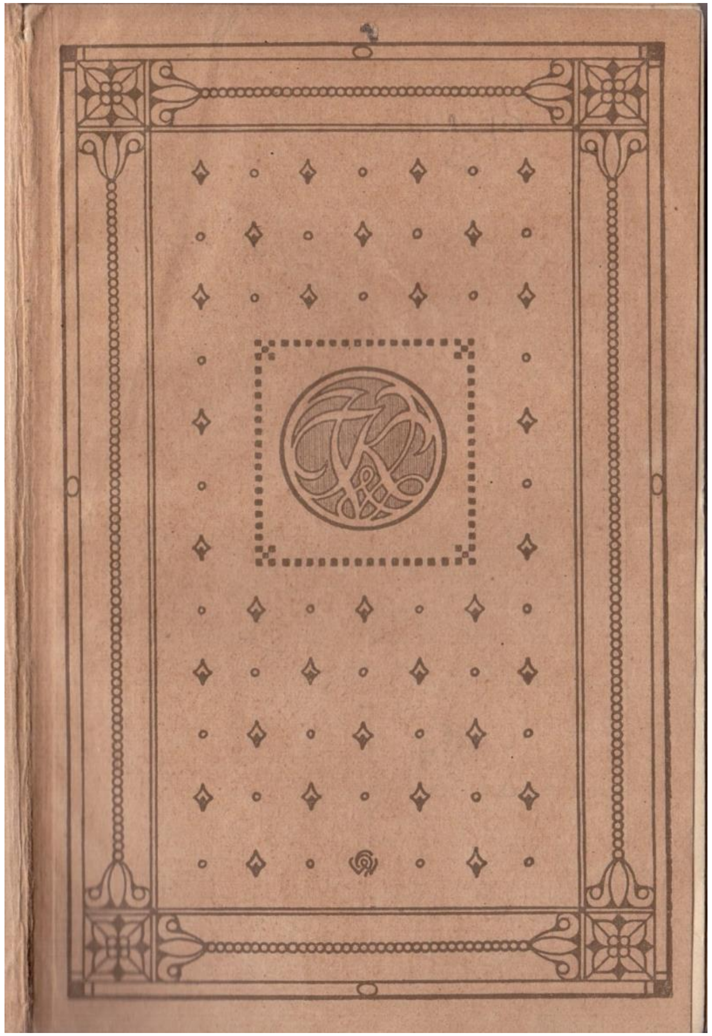


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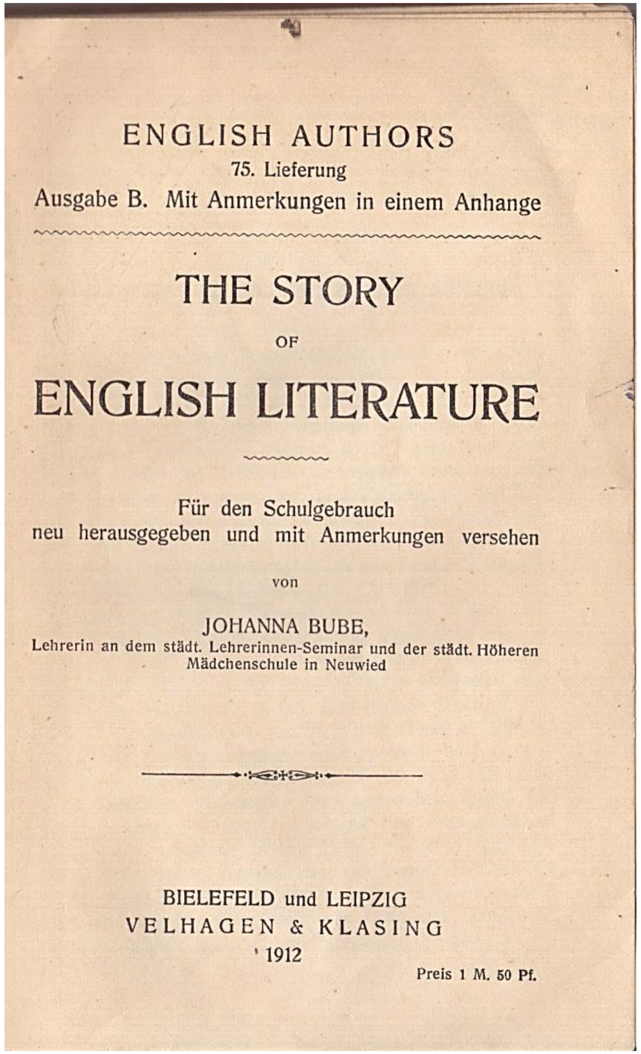
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ENGLISH AUTHORS

75. Lieferung

Ausgabe B. Mit Anmerkungen in einem Anhange

THE STORY

OF

ENGLISH LITERATURE

Für den Schulgebrauch
neu herausgegeben und mit Anmerkungen versehen

von

JOHANNA BUBE,

Lehrerin an dem städt. Lehrerinnen-Seminar und der städt. Höheren Mädchenschule in Neuwied

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XII. American Literature.

Introductory Chapter.

Origin and Growth of the English Language.

The English language, which is now spoken by most persons in England, Scotland, Wales, and Ireland, and in the numerous colonies founded or occupied by settlers from these countries, is a language of the Low German branch of the Teutonic family. It was established in Britain by German invaders, who are commonly grouped under the names of Angles, Saxons, and Jutes. When they landed on the coasts of Britain in the fifth century, they found this country inhabited by people very unlike themselves; unlike in language, for the Britons spoke a language of the Celtic family, to which the English gave the name *Welsh*, that is "foreign"; unlike in religion, for the Britons were Christians, while the English were heathens; and unlike in manners and customs, for the British had adopted some of the Roman civilisation from their old rulers.

Between the Britons and the German tribes, who gradually settled in the country and founded communities and kingdoms, there was long and bitter war; and by degrees the English pushed the

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older race back to the western mountain lands. How far the two races may have mingled is not certain; at any rate the languages did not mix, and the influence Celtic had upon English was entirely confined to the vocabulary, and did not affect the grammatical structure of the language. The most important Celtic words in modern English are names of places, especially those of Scotland and Ireland: *Aberdeen* (*aber*, "mouth"); *Dunbar*, *Dundee* (*dun*, a "protected place"); *Kilkenny* (*kill*, "church"); and a few common words, such as *bog*, *crag*, *willow*.

The Romans had also left some traces of their language in the Celtic tongue. Thus *street* comes from the Latin *strata via*, "paved way", *mile* from *milia passuum*, "a thousand paces". The endings *-caster*, *-cester*, or *-chester* (Latin *castra* "camp") are also of Roman origin. Thus we still have *Lancaster*, *Leicester*, *Winchester*, &c.

With the exception of these Celtic and Latin words, the native speech of Britain was displaced by the language of the conquering Teutons, whose vocabulary consisted of about 2,000 words, including a few words of Latin origin (*chalk*, *Saturday*) derived through the contact of their ancestors with the Romans. When the different German tribes were united enough to give a common name to the island they had conquered, the Angles named it *England* (Angle-land), and the tongue *English*. Up to 1100, however, the language is now generally termed *Anglo-Saxon* or *Old English*.

When, in 597, a band of Christian missionaries came over from Rome to convert the heathen Anglo-Saxon tribes to Christianity, many Latin words were introduced into the English language. The Latin element of this period includes not only many ecclesiastical terms (*altar*, *church*, *bishop*, *priest*), but also a number of common words, especially names of plants, animals, and foods (*plant*, *lily*, *pea*, *trout*, *butter*, *cheese*, and others).

In the ninth century the Danes began to invade Britain, and left a number of their words. It is often difficult to distinguish the Norse contributions from the Saxon, but their number is estimated at about 500. Among them may be mentioned the place-suffixes *-by*, and *-thorp*, "village", as in *Whitby*, *Oglethorp*.

In 1066, the year of the Norman Conquest, William of Normandy brought in a court speaking Norman-French; in fact, it had already become the fashion in the court of Edward the Confessor, who was educated in Normandy, to speak French. As a consequence of the Norman-French supremacy, a vast number of French words thus gradually crept into the common speech of the people, especially words for fashionable uses and manners.

In 1100, then, the year from which we date *Early English*, the English language was the *Anglo-Saxon* tongue, modified by: —

1. A few native *Celtic* proper names, and some Latin words for streets, &c.
2. *Latin* words of Church and scholar, after 597.

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3. A few *Danish* words, ninth century.
4. *Norman-French* of court and high life, after 1042.

In 1200 every educated man was expected to know three languages — English, French, and Latin. English was the common speech, French the language of polite life and literature, Latin the scholar's tongue.

In the thirteenth century, Robert of Gloucester wrote in English a *Rhymed Chronicle of Britain*, in which he says:

"For unless a man knows French, he is little thought of,
but low men keep to English and to their own speech."

From 1272, when Edward I. came to the throne, till the close of the fifteenth century, French was used in all public acts. The proverb "Jack would be a gentleman if he could speak French" also shows how very general this language was among the upper classes. In the fourteenth century, then, for a scholar to write in English took a degree of courage which may easily be underrated now. But this courage on the part of two great writers did much to shape the first literary English. Wyclif finished his English translation of the Scriptures in 1380, and it is to him that we owe much of the simplicity and force and peculiar beauty of later translations of the Bible. What Wyclif did for the language and literature of religion, Chaucer did for poetry and letters, and Spenser calls him a "well of English undefiled".

THE STORY OF ENGLISH LITERATURE.

I. The Anglo-Saxon Period.

1. Beowulf.

The Teutonic tribes who came to Britain in the fifth and sixth centuries possessed many songs and legends; but they were unwritten, and were only preserved in the memories of gleemen and minstrels. The most remarkable of these poems was the *Lay of Beowulf*. The story in its earliest form belongs to very remote pagan times, but as we now have it, it is the work of a Christian poet of the eighth or ninth century. This is the story:

Hrothgar, King of the Danes, had built a beautiful palace called Heorot for himself and his "hearth-sharers", where they feasted and rejoiced every day.

"There was the sound of the harp,
The sweet song of the poet."

But this joy was hateful to a hellish fiend named Grendel, who lived in a lonely lake. Night

after night he came to Heorot, seized some of the sleepers, and devoured them. One day a young Viking, tall and strong as a young oak-tree, came over the sea to fight with the monster. This was Beowulf, a descendant of Wodan. He was welcomed and feasted, and at night he and his fourteen companions were left to sleep in the hall.

> "Then came over the moor,
> Under the hills of mist,
> Grendel striding;
> God's wrath he bore."

He seized one of the sleepers and killed him. But Beowulf soon seized the monster with a grip of iron; a struggle began, and at last Beowulf tore off one of Grendel's arms, and he fled home to die.

The next day there was feasting and joy in Heorot; but when the warriors again lay down to sleep, Grendel's mother, the sea-wolf, came to revenge her son. She carried off the King's dearest Thane. Then Beowulf followed her to the bottom of the pool where she lived; he fought with her, and killed her with a magic sword which hung in her cave. This sword gave out a light which illumined the cave:

> "A light stood within it,
> Even as from heaven
> Brightly shineth
> The firmament's candle."

The second part of the saga of Beowulf tells how he ruled the Goths well for fifty years, and then gave his own life to save his people from a

fiery dragon. The people mourned for him and praised him "as the very king of men, and yet the mildest, kindest of them all."

The poem consists of 6,000 short lines, and in any two successive lines there are two or three words beginning with the same letter. This metrical system is called alliteration.

2. Cædmon.

About 650.

The Anglo-Saxon poet Cædmon has been called "the Father of English Song". He lived in the seventh century and is supposed to have been a cowherd in the convent of Whitby, which was founded by Hilda, a noble lady of royal blood. The Venerable Bede tells the following story of Cædmon:

Cædmon was often very sad because he did not possess the gift of song. One night, as he lay sleeping on his bed of straw, a stranger appeared to him and said, "Cædmon, sing some song to me." He said, "I cannot sing." But the angel said, "Still you must sing to me." "What shall I sing?" said Cædmon; and the answer was, "Sing of the creation of the world." Then Cædmon began to sing in praise of the Creator. When he awoke he remembered his dream-song, and he repeated his verses to Hilda, who was so well beloved that every one called her Mother. Hilda asked Cædmon to come and live in the religious house, and he spent the rest of his life there. The monks told him Bible stories, and wrote down his songs.

Bede says, "He sang first of the Creation of the Earth and the whole story of Genesis, and then of the Israelites in Egypt and their return to the Land of Promise. He also sang of the birth of Christ and His sufferings, his Ascension into Heaven, and the coming of the Holy Ghost."

Cædmon's poetry resembles the old Saxon poem *Heliand*. It contains some passages which Milton imitated in *Paradise Lost*. The opening lines of the poem on the Creation are:

"Most right it is that we praise with our words,
Love in our minds, the Warden of the Skies,
Glorious King of all the hosts of men."

3. The Venerable Bede.

Born 673. — Died 735.

Bede was placed in the monastery of Wearmouth when he was seven years of age, and three years after he was moved to Jarrow on the banks of the Tyne. "All my life," he says, "I spent in that monastery, giving my whole attention to the study of the Holy Scriptures. I always took pleasure in learning or teaching or writing something."

Bede wrote forty-five Latin books on different subjects. His greatest work is the noble *Ecclesiastical History of the English People* with its beautiful pictures of the introduction of Christianity into England.

As a teacher Bede was famous, and the school at Jarrow was crowded with hundreds of pupils. One of these, named Cuthbert, gives the following account of his master's death:

During these days Bede translated the Gospel of St. John into our own tongue. When the Tuesday before the Ascension of our Lord came, he was much troubled with shortness of breath. But he passed all that day and dictated cheerfully, saying, "Go on quickly; I know not how long I shall hold out." When the morning of Wednesday came, he ordered us to write with all speed what he had begun. And one of us said to him, "Most dear master, there is still one chapter wanting; do you think it troublesome to be asked any more questions?" He answered, "It is no trouble; take your pen, and write fast;" which he did. In the evening the same boy said, "Dear master, there is yet one sentence not written." He answered, "Write quickly." Soon after the boy said, "The sentence is now written; it is ended." He replied, "It is well; you have said the truth. It is ended." And singing "Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost," he breathed his last, and so departed to the Heavenly Kingdom.

4. Alfred the Great.

Reigned from 871 to 901.

Alfred the Great is no less famous as a scholar than as a king and a warrior. He translated many Latin books into English, his most important translations being those of Bede's *Ecclesiastical History of the English People* and of Boëthius *De Consolatione Philosophiæ*. Alfred has been called "the Father of English Prose".

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II. The Norman Period.

During the years which followed the Norman Conquest (1066), three languages existed side by side in England — Latin, the language of the clergy and the learned; French, that of polite intercourse; and English, that of the masses of the people. Latin, being the common language of Western Christendom, was used in nearly all public documents; but both Latin and French were used as the language of literature.

French Romances and Latin Chronicles.

The French minstrels, called trouvères and troubadours, composed an abundance of romances of chivalry, and sang and recited them at the courts of the Norman kings of England. Eleanor of Poitou, the wife of Henry II., was a chief patroness of these minstrels, and her son R i c h a r d I. was not only a patron but a troubadour himself. The deeds of Charlemagne and his twelve peers were the subject of many a song; and we are told that at Hastings the Norman soldiers went forward to the attack singing the *Song of Roland*. A little later people loved to hear tales of the East and of the Crusaders. Trebizonde took the place of

Roncevalle, and Godfrey of Bouillon, Solyman, the caliphs, the soldans, and the cities of Egypt and Syria became favourite topics. In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries many of these French romances were translated into English. One of them was the *Romance of Richard Cœur de Lion*, which appears to have been a favourite.

The most famous Latin chronicle belonging to the twelfth century is the *History of the Britons*, written by a monk named G e o f f r e y of M o n m o u t h. The work contains hardly a shred of historical truth; but it is a rich storehouse of romance and fable, and Shakespeare found the stories of *Lear* and *Cymbeline* in Geoffrey's chronicle. But the most interesting stories in this book were the legends of King Arthur, the national hero of the Ancient Britons, and his Round Table.

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III. The Age of Chaucer.

In the fourteenth century the Saxons and Normans had grown into one nation speaking a common language. English now became the language of literature, and its victory over both Latin and French was yearly becoming more assured. The most famous prose-writer of this period was John Wyclif, who translated the Latin Bible into English, and the greatest poet was Geoffrey Chaucer.

1. Geoffrey Chaucer.

Born about 1340 — Died 1400.

Geoffrey Chaucer was born in London, and lived on the Thames bank, which was in the fourteenth century a much pleasanter place than it is now. His father John Chaucer was a wine-merchant in the City of London. Very little is known of the poet's life. When he was about seventeen years of age, he left home to go to court, and he was probably a page in the service of Prince Lionel, one of the sons of Edward III. The court of the King of England was at that time the most brilliant in Europe. In 1359 Chaucer went to France with the Black Prince, and while the Eng-

lish were besieging Paris, he was taken prisoner by the French; but he was soon released. After his return to London he entered the King's household and married a young lady-in-waiting upon the Queen, whose name was Philippa. He was then repeatedly sent abroad on royal business, and spent a whole year in Italy. At Padua he met the Italian poet Petrarch, who told him the story of the *Patient Griselda*, and he probably saw Boccaccio at Venice. Dante had died about fifty years before, but his influence was still felt. Chaucer became acquainted with the musical language of Italy, and with Italian literature, and this journey exercised a marked influence on his writings.

John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, one of the sons of Edward III., was Chaucer's friend and patron; he became the poet's brother-in-law by marrying the sister of Philippa Chaucer. Through his kindness pensions and lucrative offices were given to the poet. During the reign of Richard II. Chaucer lost his offices. He was now growing old, his wife was dead, and he seems to have known poverty at that time. Yet it was during those years that he set to work upon his best and greatest poem, the *Canterbury Tales*.

In 1399 Henry IV., the son of the Duke of Lancaster, came to the throne, and Chaucer sent him a little poem addressed to his empty purse. His pension was now doubled, and he took a small house in the garden of St. Mary's Chapel, Westminster. Here he spent the last year of his life. He died in 1400, and was buried in Westminster Abbey.

2. The Canterbury Tales.

The *Canterbury Tales* are a number of stories which are supposed to be told by several pilgrims on their way to Canterbury. In the Prologue to the *Tales* Chaucer says that, on a bright evening in spring, he went to an inn in London, where he met twenty-nine pilgrims, who were going to make a journey to Canterbury, because they wished to pray at the tomb of Thomas à Becket, who had been murdered in Canterbury Cathedral nearly 200 years before. The poet joined the Pilgrims, and at supper the host of the inn proposed that each of the travellers should tell two stories on their way to Canterbury and two more on their way home, and they all agreed to this.

One of the Pilgrims was a Knight who had fought against the Saracens in the East. He was accompanied by his son, a young squire, who was able to make songs as well as sing them:

> "Embroidered was he, as it were a mead,
> All full of freshé flowers white and red;
> Singing he was or fluting all the day,
> He was as fresh as is the month of May."

Then there was a gentle nun, Madame Eglantine, and a poor parson, who was "rich in holy thought and work":

> "The lore of Christ and his apostles twelve
> He taught, and first he followed it himselve."

There was also a clerk or scholar of Oxenford, noted for his love of learning:

> "Sounding in moral virtue was his speech,
> And gladly wold he learn and gladly teach."

And there were several monks, and a merchant, a lawyer, a miller, a sailor, a ploughman — all callings were represented in this company of pilgrims.

The first to tell a tale was the Knight, and this was his story:

Two dear friends, Palamon and Arcite, were captives in the tower of Theseus, Duke of Athens, who had married Hippolyta, Queen of the Amazons. Hippolyta's sister Emily had accompanied her to Athens, and one morning she rose with the sun and went out into the garden to do homage to the month of May. Looking down through their barred window, the two friends saw the beautiful Emily,

> "That fairer was to seen
> Than is the lily on her stalké green,
> And fresher than the May with flowers new;
> For with the rose's colour strove her hue,
> I know't which was the fairer of the two."

They both fell in love with Emily. Now the two friends were friends no longer, and their peace of mind was gone. Each in the course of time gained his liberty, and after many strange adventures, Duke Theseus found them fiercely fighting in a wood. It was then arranged that both Palamon and Arcite should come to his court a year from that time, each with a hundred knights, that they should enter the lists, and that the victor

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in the tournament should receive the hand of Emily.

Then Theseus built a noble theatre; and when the day of trial came, the greatest kings and many ladies and nobles went to Athens to see the combat. With Palamon came the King of Thebes in a chariot of gold drawn by four white bulls, and followed by twenty white mastiffs, held with gold collars and leashes. With Arcite came the King of Lydia, riding upon a bay steed which was covered with cloth of gold, and holding a tame white eagle upon his wrist, while tame lions and leopards followed him.

In the combat, Palamon was overcome; but Arcite, while riding forward to receive the prize, was thrown from his horse and received a deadly wound. He was carried to the palace, where he died, blessing Emily and begging her to wed Palamon. After a proper time had passed Palamon and Emily were married.

Chaucer did not carry out his plan of making all the Pilgrims relate one or more stories as they went and returned from Canterbury. He did not live to finish more than twenty-four tales, two in prose, the rest in poetry.

IV. From the Death of Chaucer to the Age of Elizabeth.

The period of 150 years which followed the death of Chaucer is one of the most barren in English literature. "Of the books then written, how few are read! Of the men then famous, how few are familiar in our recollection!" says Henry Hallam. But in that dreary time many forces were at work preparing for the most fruitful season in English literature. The Revival of Learning and the Reformation produced greater independence of thought and more religious earnestness. A love of Greek art and Greek literature was awakened in England, and in the beginning of the sixteenth century the influence of Italian literature became as great as it had been in the days of Chaucer. The Earl of Surrey, the most learned nobleman at the court of Henry VIII., wrote the first sonnets in the English language, borrowing the form from Petrarch; he was also the first important writer who used blank verse, i. e. a verse of five iambics without rhyme.

Morte d'Arthur.

In 1477, during the Wars of the Roses, William Caxton set up the first printing-press in Eng-

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land, and one of the most interesting books that issued from this press was the *Morte d'Arthur*. The Arthur legend is very old, and has been told and retold by many poets in England, France, and Germany; but it seems as if it would never lose its freshness. In Caxton's time there were many French romances on this subject, which were eagerly read, and a translation and compilation was made from these romances by Sir Thomas Malory. Of him little is known, but he speaks of himself as a "servant of Jesu by night and by day", and it has been thought that he was a priest. He finished his *Morte d'Arthur* about 1480, and soon after it was printed by Caxton.

V. The Age of Shakespeare.

The "Golden Age of Good Queen Bess" is undoubtedly the richest and most brilliant period in the history of English literature. It has also been called "the Age of Spenser, Shakespeare, and Bacon". The literature of the Elizabethan Era is distinguished by great originality of thought and deep earnestness. This era saw the English drama rise from its humble beginnings and reach almost at a bound the highest excellence in Shakespeare's Plays.

1. Edmund Spenser.

Born 1552. — Died 1599.

Very little is known of Spenser's early life. Like his great predecessor Chaucer he was a Londoner, and in one of his poems he speaks of "Merry London, my most kindly nurse". His parents, who lived near the Tower, seem to have been poor, but they were related to the noble family of the de Spencers. Edmund Spenser went to Cambridge when he was seventeen, and here he formed some of those friendships which lasted through life. When he returned to London one of his college friends introduced him to Sir Philip

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Sidney, whom Queen Elizabeth called "the Jewel of her Court". Spenser and Sir Philip became friends, and the days which the poet spent at Penshurst in Kent, the beautiful home of Sidney, were among the brightest of his life. Sidney introduced his friend to his uncle, the powerful Earl of Leicester, and soon after the poet was appointed secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland. From this time to nearly the end of his life Ireland was Spenser's home. He received a share in the forfeited lands of rebels, and in 1586 he settled at Kilcolman Castle in County Cork. Here he wrote his greatest poem, the *Fairy Queen.* When the first three books of this great work were finished, Sir Walter Raleigh came to Kilcolman, read the new poem, and persuaded Spenser to come with him to London. He introduced the poet to Elizabeth, and Spenser read parts of his poem to the Queen, who was so much pleased with the glowing picture the poet had drawn of her that she gave him a pension of fifty pounds a year, thus in fact making him her "Poet Laureate". Soon after his return he married a "country lass" called Elizabeth. "Her eyes were sapphires blue, her hair of rippling gold," he says in one of his poems.

In 1598 a rebellion broke out in Ireland, and Spenser, who was Sheriff of Cork, was obliged to flee in great haste to save his life. His castle was burnt by the rebels, and his youngest child is said to have perished in the flames. Spenser with his wife and two little boys escaped to England, but he was broken-hearted, and died a few months

later. At his own wish he was buried in Westminster Abbey beside Chaucer, his master, as he loved to call him.

2. The Fairy Queen.

The Fairy Queen is an allegorical poem, because its personages represent abstract ideas. The knights are intended to represent virtues, and in their exploits we see how virtue triumphs over vice. The poem was to consist of twelve books, each of which was to contain the adventures of one knight; but of these we have only six, and it is doubtful if the poet wrote any more. The hero of the whole poem is Prince Arthur, "the image of a brave knight".

The First Book of the *Fairy Queen* is a complete work, taken by itself. It contains the story of the *Red Cross Knight:*

Gloriana, Queen of Fairyland, held a yearly feast, at which all her knights assembled. On the first day a "tall, clownish young man" entered, and, falling down before the Queen, begged to be allowed to undertake any adventure that might happen during the feast. Soon after came a fair lady, dressed in deep mourning and riding a milk-white ass. This maiden was the Lady Una, whose father and mother had been shut up in a brazen tower by a dragon. She begged the Queen to send some knight to fight with the dragon and set her parents free. The tall, clownish young man started up at once, and begged the Fairy Queen that the adventure might be his. After having put on a suit

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of armour the Lady Una had brought with her — it was the armour described by St. Paul in his Epistle to the Ephesians — he seemed "the goodliest man in all that company". Henceforth he was known as St. George, the Red Cross Knight, from the red crosses which gleamed on his breast and on his silver shield.

The Red Cross Knight and the Lady Una now set forth together, but they were parted through the cunning of the great enchanter Archimago, and the Knight followed the witch Duessa, thinking her to be Una. She took him to a beautiful palace, where he saw Lucifera, Queen of Pride, and at last, after many strange adventures, he was taken prisoner by the giant Orgoglio, the son of the earth and the wind. Meanwhile Lady Una was seeking her knight in the forest:

"Long tossed with storms and beat with bitter wind,
High over hills and low adown the dale,
She wandered many a wood, and measured many a vale."

One day she was resting in the shade of the trees, where

"Her angel's face,
As the great eye of Heaven, shinéd bright,
And made a sunshine in the shady place;
Did never mortal eye behold such heavenly grace."

Then a lion rushed upon her; but as he came near her he stopped; and then, instead of tearing her to pieces, he licked her hands and became her protector. But this lion was killed by a wicked knight, and now, at this point of greatest need,

Una met Prince Arthur in the woods. He was dressed in glittering armour, that "shined far away", and his shield was made of one diamond, upon which no weapon could even make a mark. Seeing that Una was in sorrow, Arthur begged her to tell him her trouble. She did so, and he slew the giant Orgoglio and delivered the Red Cross Knight, whom Una took to the House of Holiness, where three lovely sisters, Faith, Hope, and Charity, taught him repentance. Now the Red Cross Knight was ready for the conflict with the dragon, and he and Una left the House of Holiness, and went to the kingdom of Una's parents. One day they heard a hideous roaring sound, and presently they saw the dragon "stretched upon the sunny side of a great hill". At the gleam of the knight's armour the monster roused himself to battle, and came on towards them, "half flying, half footing" in his haste. His huge wings shaded the land like the shadows of mountains, and his eyes shone like fiery beacons seen from many a shire upon the mountain tops. For three days the Red Cross Knight fought with this monster, and, though he was twice overthrown, he killed his enemy at length. Una's father and mother were now set free, and the Red Cross Knight was betrothed to Una.

The Fairy Queen is called Gloriana, because she represents the glory of God, the highest object of devotion and service for every true knight. Prince Arthur is the perfect knight, in whom the virtues of all the other knights are combined. He

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alone is worthy to win Gloriana. He is also the impersonation of Heavenly Grace, which alone can unite Holiness and Truth. The Red Cross Knight represents Holiness; Una is Truth, the guide and companion of Holiness; Archimago is the type of hypocrisy; Duessa signifies falsehood; the lion is the impersonation of reason, Orgoglio (orgueil) represents pride. The parents of Una are the types of all mankind; formerly lords of Eden, they were cast out by the dragon Sin, and they can be restored to their kingdom only by Holiness and Truth, assisted by Heavenly Grace.

Some of the personages of the Fairy Queen are portraits of living men and women: Gloriana is Queen Elizabeth, Arthur is perhaps Leicester, Duessa is Mary Queen of Scots, Orgoglio is probably meant to represent Philipp II., King of Spain.

The Spenserian stanza is the "ottava rima" or eight-line stanza of the Italians, to which the poet added a ninth line two syllables longer than the others, called an Alexandrine:

The Ministry of Angels.

"And is there care in Heaven? And is there love
In heavenly spirits to these creatures base,
That may compassion of their evils move?
There is: — else much more wretched were the case
Of men than beasts: but O! th'exceeding grace
Of highest God, that loves his creatures so,
And all his works with mercy doth embrace,
That blessed angels he sends to and fro,
To serve to wicked man, to serve his wicked foe!"

3. The Early English Drama.

The oldest plays known in England were the *Mysteries* or *Miracle Plays*, which were performed on saints' days and other holidays, and the subjects of which were Bible stories and the lives of the saints. The stage was originally built within a cathedral, and generally divided into three platforms, representing Heaven, Earth, and Hell, and holding angels, human beings, and fiends. At Christmas time a play on the Nativity was mostly given. Then the audience saw the shepherds watching their flocks by night; they heard the greeting of the angelic hosts from the sky; then they followed the shepherds to Bethlehem, and saw them kneeling before the Child Christ, into whose presence also came the Wise Men of the East with royal gifts to do homage to the Son of God.

Such plays were common until the end of the fourteenth century, when the *Mystery* gave way to the *Morality*, which was an allegory acted upon the stage. Instead of angels, fiends, and Bible heroes we have characters representing Goodness, Wickedness, Justice, Mercy, &c.

The most popular plays from the middle of the fifteenth to the middle of the sixteenth century were the *Interludes*, which are supposed to have been played between the acts of the long Moralities. They were generally very short and not at all religious in character, their sole object being to amuse the audience.

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Longer plays, in which shepherds and shepherdesses, Cupids, Graces, and Muses took part, were called *Masques*. They were generally very graceful and pleasing, and continued in favour till the end of the seventeenth century. An old chronicler records a masque which was given at one of the royal palaces during the reign of Henry VIII. A castle, with towers, gates, and battlements, was erected in the great hall, and garrisoned with beautiful ladies, whose satin dresses were covered with leaves of gold. This was Castle Dangerous, which had never yet surrendered to an enemy. Presently there entered a company of goodly knights, of whom King Henry was one. They laid siege to the castle with great vehemence, for they had never yet been vanquished. After an amusing scene of storming and resistance, the fair ladies surrendered; they came out on the lawn and danced a graceful measure with the victorious knights. Then the castle vanished as if by magic.

The first English tragedies and comedies were performed in London about the year 1550. The first theatres established in London were very rough. Great people had seats on the stage, and there were covered wooden galleries for those who paid more than the greater part of the audience. Most of those, however, who came to see the play sat in the pit, where they had no shelter above their heads from the wind and the rain. Hardly any attention was paid to scenery in these old theatres. Sometimes a placard bearing the name "London" or "Athens" alone denoted where the

scene was laid; a gilded chair under a canopy gave the idea of a royal palace, an altar stood for a church, and a table covered with bottles and tankards represented an inn. The stage was generally strewn with rushes, and sometimes, during the performance of a tragedy, the whole stage was hung with black to add solemnity to the scene. The actors were all men. "In the time of Good Queen Bess the players, before dismissing the audience, knelt at the front of the stage, and offered up a prayer for the Queen."

4. Christopher Marlowe.

Born 1564. — Died 1593.

A little band of talented men — Lyly, Greene, Nash, Peele, Marlowe, and others — were the immediate predecessors of Shakespeare. Of these writers Marlowe was by far the greatest. He was a man who led a wild and reckless life, and his death was in keeping with his life. Having quarrelled with a serving man in a low gambling-house, he was stabbed with his own dagger. Marlowe's plays are extravagant in plot and language, but there are passages of splendid poetry in them. His best-known play is *The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus*, which Goethe greatly admired.

5. William Shakespeare.

Born 1564. — Died 1616.

William Shakespeare was born in the pleasant old country town of Stratford-on-Avon on the 23d of April 1564, six years after the

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accession of Queen Elizabeth. His father, John Shakespeare, was an alderman and, for a time, mayor of Stratford. His mother, Mary Arden, belonged to one of the oldest Warwickshire families, and she brought to her husband, who was probably a glover and wool-merchant, a tiny estate of arable and pasture land and a house. John Shakespeare and his wife were not able to write their names; but in the days of Elizabeth people were beginning to understand the value of a good education, and John and Mary Shakespeare sent their little son William to the Grammar School of the place, where the sons of townsmen were taught without payment. Here the boy learned English, some Latin, and a little Greek. In consequence of his father's misfortunes in business he left school at the age of fourteen, and he appears to have worked with his father for several years.

In 1582, while still a youth of eighteen, William married a farmer's daughter, Anne Hathaway, who was eight years older than her husband. When he was twenty-two he went to seek his fortune in London, leaving his wife and his three children with his father and mother at Stratford. A very old tradition states that he had stolen deer from a park on the banks of the Avon, and that Sir Thomas Lucy, the owner of the estate, was so angry that young Shakespeare had to fly from his home to London. But this story may be dismissed as worthless.

In London Shakespeare became a player; he belonged to a company called "the Queen's Players", and he began by acting inferior parts at the Black-

friars Theatre, and altering old plays to suit the players or the audience. He soon became a sharer in the Blackfriars Playhouse and afterwards in the Globe Theatre too. In 1592 he began to write original plays, and he soon became famous as a dramatist. The wittiest poets and writers of the day were his friends, and he spent many a merry night at the "Mermaid", where the young authors met to "sup and laugh". He also found many patrons among the great and powerful, and the young Earl of Southampton was one of his truest friends and admirers.

Year by year Shakespeare continued to prosper, and though he had so many friends in London he always considered Stratford his home. He visited his native town every year, and at length he was enabled to gratify a wish he had long cherished. He bought a house in Stratford, called "New Place", and looked forward to the time when he should retire and end his days in peace in his native town.

The closing years of Elizabeth's reign were times of trouble for Shakespeare's friend, Lord Southampton, and the poet was doubtless saddened by this. He also had his own domestic griefs; his only son had died, and in 1601 his father was taken from him.

The accession of the new King, James I., brought new fame and dignity to Shakespeare. The Earl of Southampton was released from prison; the "King's Players" were often called to the court, and Shakespeare's plays were those most frequently

performed. But the poet himself soon afterwards retired from London and settled down in Stratford. After a few quiet, uneventful years, spent with his wife and children among the scenes of his childhood, the great poet died on April 23, 1616, and was buried in the beautiful old parish church of Stratford.

He was generally known as "gentle Will Shakespeare", a man of kindly manners, great good-nature, and open hand. Ben Jonson describes him as "indeed honest, and of an open and free nature."

Shakespeare wrote thirty-seven plays, which may be divided into three classes — Tragedies, Historical Plays, and Comedies. Among his principal tragedies may be named *Macbeth*, *Othello*, *Hamlet*, and *King Lear*.

The most famous of Shakespeare's historical plays are *King John*, *Richard II.*, *Henry IV.*, *Henry V.*, *Richard III.*, *Henry VIII.*, *Coriolanus*, and *Julius Cæsar*.

The best-known of his comedies are *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *As You Like It*, *The Winter's Tale*, and *The Tempest*.

Shakespeare's plays are divided into five acts; they are for the most part written in blank verse, only in the early comedies there is a large proportion of rhymed verse.

Besides his plays, Shakespeare is known as the author of a few songs and longer poems, and more than a hundred sonnets full of beauty.

6. A Midsummer Night's Dream.

Hermia and Lysander were lovers; but Hermia's father wished her to marry another man, named Demetrius. Now in Athens, where they lived, there was a law by which any girl who refused to marry according to her father's wishes might be put to death. Hermia's father was so angry with her for refusing to do as he wished that he actually brought her before the Duke of Athens to ask that she might be killed if she still refused to obey him. The Duke gave her four days to think about it, and, at the end of that time, if she still refused to marry Demetrius, she would have to die.

Lysander was nearly mad with grief, and he thought that the best thing to do was for Hermia to run away to his aunt's house at a place beyond the reach of that cruel law; and there he would come to her and marry her. But before she started she told her friend Helena what she was going to do.

Helena had been Demetrius' sweetheart long before his marriage with Hermia had been thought of, and being very silly, like all jealous people, she told Demetrius that Hermia was going to the wood outside Athens, knowing that he would follow her. "And I can follow him, and at least I shall see him," she said to herself.

The wood where Lysander was to meet Hermia, and where the other two had decided to follow them, was full of fairies. The King and Queen of the fairies,

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Oberon and Titania, who might have been as happy as the days were long, had thrown away all their joy in a foolish quarrel. One of their little elves said sadly:

"And now they never meet in grove or green,
By fountain clear or spangled starlight sheen,
But they do square that all their elves, for fear,
Creep into acorn cups and hide them there."

So, instead of keeping one happy court and dancing all night through in the moonlight, the King with his attendants wandered through one part of the wood, while the Queen with hers kept state in another. Puck, who was Oberon's favourite, meeting one of Titania's elves, said to her, "How now, spirit: whither wander you?" And the elf replied:

"Over hill, over dale,
Thorough bush, thorough brier,
Over park, over pale,
Thorough flood, thorough fire,
I do wander everywhere,
Swifter than the moon's sphere;
And I serve the fairy queen,
To dew her orbs upon the green.
The cowslips tall her pensioners be;
In their gold coats spots you see,
Those be rubies, fairy favours,
In those freckles live their savours:
I must go seek some dew-drops here,
And hang a pearl in every cowslip's ear."

The cause of the quarrel between Oberon and Titania was a little Indian boy whom the Queen

had taken to be one of her followers. Oberon wanted the child to follow him and be one of his fairy knights; but Titania would not give him up.

This night, in a mossy, moonlight glade, the King and Queen of the fairies met.

"Ill met by moonlight, proud Titania!" said the King.

"What, jealous Oberon!" answered the Queen. "Fairies, skip hence! I am not friends with him now."

"It rests with you to make up the quarrel," said Oberon. "Give me that little Indian boy, and I will again be your friend."

"Set your heart at rest," said the Queen, "the fairyland buys not the child of me. Fairies, away!"

And she and her train rode off down the moonbeams.

"Well, go thy way," said Oberon, "thou shalt not from this grove till I torment thee for this injury."

Then Oberon called Puck, the spirit of mischief. "Fetch me the flower called love-in-idleness," he said. "The juice of that little purple flower laid on the eyes of those who sleep will make them love the first thing they see when they awake. I will put some of this juice on my Titania's eyes, and when she wakes, she will love the first thing she sees, be it lion, bear, or wolf, or bull, or meddling monkey, or busy ape."

While Puck was gone Demetrius passed through the glade followed by Helena; and still she told him how she loved him and reminded him of all

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his promises, and still he told her that he did not and could not love her, and that his promises were nothing. Oberon was sorry for poor Helena, and when Puck returned with the flower, he bade him follow Demetrius and put some of the juice on his eyes. So Puck set off, and wandering through the wood, found, not Demetrius but Lysander, on whose eyes he put the juice. When Lysander awoke he saw, not his own Hermia but Helena, who was walking through the wood looking for the cruel Demetrius; and directly he saw her he loved her and left his own lady, under the spell of the crimson flower.

When Hermia awoke she found Lysander gone, and she wandered about the wood trying to find him. Puck went back and told Oberon what he had done, and the King of the fairies soon found that he had made a mistake, and set about looking for Demetrius, on whose eyes he put the juice of the magic flower. The first thing Demetrius saw when he awoke was also Helena, and so both the young men followed her through the wood, and it was now Hermia's turn to seek her false lover, as Helena had done before. The end of it was that Helena and Hermia began to quarrel, and Demetrius and Lysander went off to fight. Oberon was sorry that his scheme to help the lovers had turned out so badly, and he said to Puck:

"You must overhang the night with drooping fog, and lead these young Athenians astray, so that one will never find the other. When they are tired out and fall asleep, drop this herb on Lysander's eyes. That will give him his old sight and his old love, and each man will have the lady who loves him, and all will be well with them. They will all think that this has been only a Midsummer Night's Dream."

Now Oberon found Titania asleep on a bank where grew thyme, oxlips, violets and woodbine, musk-roses and eglantine. He stooped over her and laid the juice on her eyes, saying:

"What thou seest when thou dost wake,
Do it for thy true-love take;
Love, and languish for his sake."

Now it happened that, when Titania awoke, the first thing she saw was a stupid clown named Bottom, one of a party of players who had come out into the wood to rehearse a play. This clown had met Puck, who had clapped an ass's head on his shoulders, so that it looked as if it grew there. When Titania saw this dreadful monster and heard him sing, she said, "What angel wakes me from my flowery bed? Are you as wise as you are beautiful?"

"If I am wise enough to find my way out of this wood, that's enough for me," said the foolish clown.

"Do not desire to go out of this wood," said Titania. "I love you, and I will give you fairies to attend on you."

So she called four fairies, whose names were Pease-blossom, Cobweb, Moth, and Mustard-seed; and she said:

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"Be kind and courteous to this gentleman,
Feed him with apricocks and dewberries,
With purple grapes, green figs, and mulberries;
And pluck the wings from painted butterflies
To fan the moonbeams from his sleeping eyes."

"I will," said one of the fairies, and all the others said, "I will."

"Now sit down with me," said the Queen to Bottom, "and let me stroke your dear cheeks, and stick musk-roses in your smooth, sleek head, and kiss your fair large ears, my gentle joy."

"Where's Pease-blossom?" asked the clown with the ass's head. He did not care much about the Queen's affection, but he was very proud of having fairies to wait on him. "Ready," said Pease-blossom.

"Scratch my head, Pease-blossom," said Bottom. "Where's Cobweb?" "Ready," said Cobweb.

"Kill me the red humble-bee on the top of the thistle yonder," said the clown, "and bring me the honey-bag."

"Would you like anything to eat?" said the Fairy Queen; "shall my fairies fetch you new nuts from the squirrel's hoard?"

"I'd rather have a handful or two of good dry oats," said the clown — for his donkey's head made him desire donkey's food. — "But please don't let any of your people disturb me, I am going to sleep."

Then the Queen said, "And I will wind thee in my arms. O how I love thee, how I dote on thee!"

And so, when Oberon came along, he saw his beautiful Queen lavishing kisses and endearments on a clown with a donkey's head. He took pity on her, but before he released her from the enchantment, he persuaded her to give him the little Indian boy he so much desired to have. Then he threw some juice of a disenchanting flower on her eyes, and in a moment she saw plainly that she had loved a donkey, and knew how foolish she had been.

Oberon took off the ass's head from the clown, and left him to finish his sleep with his own silly head lying on the thyme and violets.

Thus all was made plain and straight again: Oberon and Titania loved each other more than ever; Demetrius thought of no one but Helena, and Helena had never had any thought of any one but Demetrius. As for Hermia and Lysander, they were as loving a couple as you could find on a summer's day. So the four mortal lovers went back to Athens and were married; and the Fairy King and Queen lived happily together in the lovely wood near Athens.

7. King Richard II.

Richard II., the son of the Black Prince, became King at the age of eleven. He reigned from 1377 to 1399. The brothers of the Black Prince, the Dukes of Lancaster, York, and Gloucester, tried to keep the young King in tutelage as long as they could, and he hated and mistrusted them. In 1389 he declared himself of age, and took the govern-

ment into his own hands. Richard's reign was troublous and unfortunate. He was wasteful, dissipated, and violent in temper, and the people were discontented because he enriched his favourites, who were hated as upstarts. The nobles, headed by the Duke of Gloucester, the youngest of the King's uncles, opposed Richard's policy, and the King arrested many of them and accused them of high treason. Gloucester too was seized and hurried off to Calais, and when he should have been tried it was announced that he had suddenly died in prison. Every one believed, and some people knew, that he had been murdered by order of his nephew, King Richard. Here Shakespeare's play opens.

The only son of the Duke of Lancaster, Henry Bolingbroke, Duke of Hereford, and his enemy Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk, appeared before the King to accuse each other of high treason. Richard decided that they should be confronted, and speak "face to face, and frowning brow to brow." Bolingbroke then accused Norfolk, who was governor of the town and castle of Calais, of having murdered the Duke of Gloucester. Bolingbroke knew that Richard had planned Gloucester's death, and in striking at Norfolk, he was really striking at the King himself. From that moment Richard hated and feared his cousin Bolingbroke, and tried to get rid of this dangerous enemy. The quarrel of the two nobles was to be settled by trial of battle, but when the combat was to begin, Richard stopped it, and banished Norfolk for life, and

Hereford for ten years, which were afterwards, for the sake of Hereford's father, John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, reduced to six. The old Duke tried to comfort his son by saying:

"All places that the eye of Heaven visits
Are to a wise man ports and happy havens."

Bolingbroke exclaimed:

"Then, England's ground, farewell; sweet soil, adieu:
My mother and my nurse, that bears me yet!
Where'er I wander, boast of this I can,
Though banished, yet a true-born Englishman."

This sentence of banishment, unjustly pronounced on Bolingbroke, proved to be the cause of Richard's fall.

John of Gaunt did not survive his son's exile many months. Before his death he reproved his nephew severely, asking him how he dared to treat his country so badly, his England,

"This royal throne of kings, this sceptred isle,
This earth of majesty, this seat of Mars,
This other Eden, demi-paradise,
This precious stone set in the silver sea,
Which serves it in the office of a wall,
This blessed plot, this earth, this realm, this England."

But his rebuke was thrown away; Richard flew into an ungovernable passion, and Gaunt left him, exclaiming:

"Live in thy shame, but die not shame with thee:
These words hereafter thy tormentors be."

There was neither truth nor honour in the King, for directly after Gaunt's death his estates, which

should have passed to Bolingbroke, were seized by Richard to provide funds for an expedition to Ireland, where a rebellion had broken out.

While the King was in Ireland, Henry of Hereford landed at Ravenspurg to claim the estates of his father. Many English nobles, including the Earl of Northumberland and his son Henry Percy, hastened to join him. The King's uncle, the Duke of York, who acted as regent, was loyal but weak; he was now beside himself with anxiety and terror. He had an interview with Bolingbroke, who was steadily rising in popular favour, and when Bolingbroke called him "gracious uncle" he answered angrily, "I am no traitor's uncle!" But Bolingbroke told him that he was no rebel, and had only come to claim his own, and York accompanied him to Bristol.

Richard was detained in Ireland by contrary winds, and when he at last landed in Wales he found that an army of Welshmen, on whom he had relied, had dispersed before his arrival. One of his friends told him that the whole country had passed into the power of Hereford:

"Your uncle York is joined with Bolingbroke,
And all your northern castles yielded up,
And all your southern gentlemen in arms
Upon his party."

Richard was thrown into despair. He had an interview with Bolingbroke at Flint Castle, and Bolingbroke knelt to him, still pretending to be a loyal subject; but Richard knew that all was lost.

He was now conducted to London. The Lords and Commons met at Westminster Hall and deposed Richard, hailing Bolingbroke as King Henry the Fourth.

The Bishop of Carlisle alone dared to oppose Hereford's plans. He exclaimed:

"My Lord of Hereford here, whom you call king,
Is a foul traitor to proud Hereford's king;
And if you crown him, let me prophesy,
The blood of England shall manure the ground,
And future ages groan for this foul act."

The Bishop was arrested on charge of high treason, but Henry afterwards pardoned him, saying:

"For though mine enemy thou hast ever been,
High sparks of honour in thee have I seen."

Richard was now brought to Westminster Hall to resign the crown, and he bitterly bewailed his loss of kingly power. In prosperity he had shown no temperance, in adversity he showed no fortitude. Richard took leave of his unhappy Queen, who pleaded in vain, "Whither he goes, thither let me go!" He was confined in the lonely castle of Pomfret; and soon after Sir Pierce of Exton, in whose presence Henry had exclaimed, "Have I no friend will rid me of this living fear?" murdered Richard in his prison.

8. Macbeth.

Duncan, King of Scotland, had a near kinsman who was named Macbeth, a great and powerful lord, much esteemed for his courage and success

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in time of war. A great battle had been fought and gained; and Macbeth, with another Scotch general named Banquo, was returning from the field of victory. On a wild and desolate heath the two generals were stopped by the appearance of three weird, terrible figures, whose wild attire gave them an aspect scarcely human. The first of these witches greeted Macbeth as "Thane of Glamis"; the second called him "Thane of Cawdor"; and the third said, "All hail, Macbeth! that shalt be king hereafter."

It was strange enough to Macbeth to find that the weird sisters knew him, but still more strange to be thus addressed; for he had no prospect of ascending the throne, as the King had sons to succeed him.

Banquo now addressed the witches, saying:

"If you can look into the seeds of time,
And say which grain will grow, and which will not,
Speak then to me, who neither beg, nor fear,
Your favours or your hate."

And they proclaimed him, "Lesser than Macbeth, and greater," — "Not so happy, yet much happier!" And they said, "Thy children shall be kings, though thou be none."

While the two generals were marvelling what all this could mean, some messengers came from King Duncan to confer the dignity of Thane of Cawdor on Macbeth. This was so exact a fulfilment of one prophecy that he began to think the witches might be equally correct on all points,

and that he really might soon reign over Scotland.

Macbeth had a proud and ambitious wife; and when he sent her a letter telling her what the witches had promised him, she determined to secure greatness at any cost, even at the cost of Duncan's life.

"Glamis thou art, and Cawdor: and shalt be
What thou art promised; yet do I fear thy nature;
It is too full of the milk of human kindness
To catch the nearest way."

King Duncan was in the habit of paying visits to his nobles, and at this time he chose to come to Macbeth's castle of Inverness, bringing with him his sons Malcolm and Donalbain and numerous retainers. Macbeth informed his wife of the royal visit, saying, "My dearest love, Duncan comes here to-night." — "And when goes hence?" asked Lady Macbeth. "To-morrow, as he purposes." — "O, never shall sun that morrow see!" cried Lady Macbeth.

The King was so much wearied with his journey that he was glad to retire to rest at an early hour. He had two attendants sleeping in his room, but their presence did not prevent Lady Macbeth from attempting the murder. As she feared that her husband's nature was not hard and cruel enough to commit the deed, she approached the sleeping King with a dagger in her hand, having first given his grooms so much wine that they were completely stupefied.

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As she looked on Duncan's face something in its expression reminded her of her own father, and her courage failed her. But her husband overcame his own fear, and entering the King's chamber, quickly despatched him.

Next moment, horror overtook him; one of the grooms stirred in his sleep and cried, "God bless us," — to which the other answered, "Amen;" and Macbeth listened shuddering. Then it seemed to him as if a voice cried, "Sleep no more! Macbeth doth murder sleep."

Returning to his wife, the wretched man told her of these imaginations; but she ridiculed his weakness and bade him wash the blood from his fingers:

"A little water clears us of this deed:
How easy is it then!"

Then she took the stained dagger and passed it across the cheeks of the sleeping attendants, so that they might be suspected of taking the King's life.

When morning came Macbeth and his wife feigned violent grief at the fate of their King; and yet suspicion seemed to fall on them, although the bloody daggers left by the side of the grooms, and the stains upon their cheeks, were pointed out. The sons of Duncan fled at once, the elder to England, the younger to Ireland; and thus Macbeth was heir to the crown, and the prediction of the witches was fulfilled.

Though placed in so high a position Macbeth was not happy, for the remembrance of his crime

haunted him by day and by night. Nor could he forget that the weird sisters had declared that Banquo's children, not his own, should be kings after him; and he resolved on another murder — the murder of Banquo and his son Fleance. To this end, he made a banquet, inviting all the chief lords and, of course, the two intended victims of the plot, who were to be attacked and stabbed on their way to the palace. Banquo was killed thus, but his son escaped; and while this evil deed was being done, Macbeth pretended to regret the delay of his dear friend and noble thane.

Just then the ghost of Banquo entered, and took the King's place at the table, so that, turning round, Macbeth started and cried, "Which of you have done this?" No one else saw the spectre — for, indeed, it was but the creation of Macbeth's guilty conscience; and therefore the guests cried, "What, my good lord?" and marvelled that he did not go to his seat.

"Prithee, see there! behold! look!" cried the terrified King, turning to his wife. But then the ghost seemed to vanish, and, recovering himself, Macbeth sat down, and was about to drink to the health of his guests, and of "his dear friend Banquo", when directly he uttered this name, the phantom reappeared and made him tremble.

"Avaunt, and quit my sight! let the earth hide thee!" he cried; and though Lady Macbeth tried to explain that he had always been subject to these nervous fancies, she was in such fear lest

the secret might be discovered that she hastened to dismiss the guests.

Macbeth now resolved to seek the three witches, and get from them some further knowledge of what would happen in the future. When he came to their cave, they were preparing charms, in order to make the spirits of evil grant them revelations. The first spirit they called bade Macbeth beware of Macduff, Thane of Fife. The second evil spirit assumed the form of a child sprinkled with blood, and advised Macbeth to fear no enemy, "for none of woman born shall harm Macbeth." The third took the shape of a crowned child with a tree in his hand, who said:

"Be lion-mettled, proud, and take no care
Who chafes, who frets, or where conspirers are:
Macbeth shall never vanquished be until
Great Birnam wood to high Dunsinane hill
Shall come against him."

Thus the witches contrived to lull Macbeth into a false security. But there was one thing more the King longed to know: should the murdered Banquo's son ever reign over Scotland? When he asked the witches to tell him this, there was a sound of music, and eight shadowy kings passed by; last of all came Banquo, smiling on Macbeth, and pointing to them. From this the King understood that they would be the descendants of his hated victim, and he left the cave with his mind full of terrible thoughts.

The very first news which greeted him was that an army was being raised against him by

Malcolm, the rightful heir, and that Macduff, Thane of Fife, had gone to England to join it. Upon this Macbeth attacked the castle in which Lady Macduff and her children lived, and killed them and all their kinsmen. This deed turned the hearts of the nobles against the King; many went over to join Malcolm, while those who remained in Scotland hated him so much that he passed his days in continual fear of being murdered.

All this time Lady Macbeth was suffering the keenest remorse of conscience, and so disturbed was her mind that she would walk in her sleep and rub her hands, as if to take the bloody stain from them. "Here's the smell of the blood still," she cried; "all the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand!" — Then the thought of Banquo mingled with the recollection of the night when Duncan died. "Wash your hands, put on your nightgown; look not so pale: — I tell you yet again, Banquo's buried; he cannot come out of his grave." — Soon after the unfortunate woman died, as it is supposed, by her own act.

Macbeth was now alone in the world, with no one in whom to confide, and life seemed so hateful that he cared not how soon it was over:

"I have lived long enough; my way of life
Is fallen into the sere, the yellow leaf;
And that which should accompany old age,
As honour, love, obedience, troops of friends,
I must not look to have; but, in their stead,
Curses, not loud, but deep, mouth-honour, breath,
Which the poor heart would fain deny, and dare not."

When Macbeth heard that Malcolm was coming at the head of a powerful army, he shut himself up in the castle of Dunsinane. One day a messenger came to him, declaring that, as he had looked towards Birnam, the wood began to move. Malcolm's army was approaching, and each of the soldiers had hewn off a green branch, which he carried before him. Macbeth now rushed out of his strong castle, and a desperate encounter followed, in which Macduff attacked the guilty King, who had murdered his wife and children. After a sharp struggle Macbeth was overcome and died a warrior's death.

Amidst the joyful acclamations of his people, young Malcolm ascended the throne of Scotland, which was his rightful inheritance as the son of King Duncan the Meek.

9. Ben Jonson.

Born 1573. — Died 1637.

Benjamin Jonson was born in London in 1573. His father was a Puritan minister, but he knew more of his stepfather, a bricklayer. After serving in the wars in the Netherlands, he returned to London, where he joined the players. Like Shakespeare he acted and altered plays, until he found his own power as a dramatist. One of his first comedies was *Every Man in his Humour*, which was brought out by the "Queen's Players", Shakespeare himself taking a part. In this and in his other plays Jonson is careful to maintain the unities of place and time, which

Shakespeare disregarded. Jonson condemned the romantic drama. Besides this comedy he wrote several others and two tragedies referring to Roman history.

Jonson died in 1637, and was buried in Westminster Abbey. His tomb is marked by the simple words, "O rare Ben Jonson."

A few of Jonson's lyrics are excellent, and will perhaps be best remembered of all his works.

10. Francis Bacon.

Born 1561. — Died 1626.

Francis Bacon, the greatest philosopher of the Age of Elizabeth, was born in London. His father was Queen Elizabeth's Lord Keeper of the Great Seal, and the Queen, who used to amuse herself with talking to the clever boy, called him her "little Lord Keeper". One day she asked him how old he was, and he answered, "I am two years younger than Your Majesty's happy reign."

He went to Cambridge when he was eleven years of age, and studied diligently for three or four years. At Cambridge he came to the conclusion, young as he was, that a new method of searching for truth was necessary if there was to be any progress in the study of nature. After spending a few years in France, Bacon began to study the law in London, and in a short time he became one of the best lawyers of the day. He worked very hard at his profession, always with the one idea — that of getting enough

money to be able to retire to Cambridge and study his philosophy. In the House of Commons he was a foremost member, and Ben Jonson gives a fine description of him as an orator. "His hearers could not cough," he says, "or look aside from him without loss. The fear of every man that heard him was lest he should make an end."

When James I. succeeded to the throne, Bacon became Lord Chancellor with the title of Lord Verulam, and held office for four years. Then it was discovered that he had taken bribes. He was sentenced to pay a fine of £ 40,000, to be imprisoned in the Tower, and to be deprived of all his offices. In taking bribes, Bacon had followed the corrupt practice of that age. "I was," he says, "the justest judge that was in England these fifty years. But it was the justest censure that was these two hundred years."

After being only two or three days in the Tower Bacon was released; his fine was remitted, and he was pardoned; but he was not allowed to live in London or sit in Parliament. Now he busied himself with his literary and scientific work. One day he was taking a drive, and the ground was covered with snow. His mind was running as usual on problems in natural science, and he wanted to try the effect of cold in stopping decay. Therefore he bought two fowls from a woman by the way and stuffed them with snow; but in doing so, he caught a chill, and he was obliged to stop at the house of one of his friends in London. Here he died a few days later.

Bacon has been called "the Father of Modern Science", because he worked out a new method of philosophy — the inductive method, that is "the method of discovering the laws of nature through observation and experiment." The first book of his philosophy was *The Advancement of Learning*. Afterwards he translated it into Latin, and his great philosophical work, the *Novum Organum* — the New Instrument of getting Knowledge — was also composed in Latin. James I. said in jest, "This book is like the peace of God, which passeth understanding."

Besides Bacon published a volume of essays — *Essays or Counsels Civil and Moral* — which are written in English. He uses the word "essay" in the sense of a testing or weighing of things, so as to prove their real value. Some of the things he thus tested were *Studies*, *Truth*, *Friendship*, &c.

Familiar Quotations from Bacon's Essays:

"Knowledge is power."

"Fortune makes him a fool whom she makes her darling."

"Read not to contradict and confute, nor to believe and take for granted, nor to find talk and discourse, but to weigh and consider."

"Small draughts of philosophy lead to atheism, but larger bring back to God."

"The desire of power in excess caused the angels to fall; the desire of knowledge in excess caused man to fall; but in charity there is no excess, neither can man or angel come in danger by it."

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VI. The Age of Milton.

In the reign of Charles I. questions of the deepest interest stirred the minds of the English people; it was a time of action and strong feeling. The questions of Church differences were growing more and more important, and both Churchmen and Puritans were ready to suffer death for their faith. Closely connected with the religious questions were others of political interest, and two parties began to form — the one round the King, the other round the Parliament. The devotion of the Royalists or Cavaliers to their King, as well as the faithfulness of the Parliamentary party to the constitution and the laws are both represented in the literature of the times.

The best-known of the Cavalier poets was Robert Herrick; the greatest Puritan poet was John Milton.

1. The Cavalier Poets.

The best poems composed by the Cavaliers were short lyrics, especially religious poems and songs of love and war. The Cavaliers laughed at poverty and hardships suffered in the cause of the King; one of them sings:

"We do not suffer here alone,
Though we are beggared, so's the King;
'Tis sin t'have wealth when he has none,
Tush! poverty's a royal thing!"

Another of the court poets, Richard Lovelace, who lost his fortune and everything in the King's cause, sang to the lady he loved on "Going to the Wars":

"I could not love thee, dear, so much,
Loved I not honour more."

Robert Herrick (b. 1591. — d. 1674), the most celebrated of the Cavalier Poets, was a clergyman of the Church of England. His sympathies were with the King, though he took no part in the wars, and in 1647 the Parliament deprived him of his living in Devonshire, because he was an ardent Royalist. He wrote many songs about beauty, love, wine, and country pastimes. His songs in praise of flowers — *To Daffodils*, *To Blossoms*, *Gather the Rosebuds while you may*, &c. — are especially full of delicate beauty. He says:

"I sing of brooks, of blossoms, birds, and bowers,
Of April, May, of June and July flowers."

2. John Milton.

Born 1608. — Died 1674.

Like Chaucer and Spenser, John Milton was born in London. His father had been cut off by his family for becoming a Puritan; he was a kind of lawyer, and gained his living by writing and

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copying deeds. Milton's boyhood was spent in a quiet, happy home; he received his first lessons from his mother, and his father, who was one of the best musicians of the day, instructed his son in music from an early age. When John Milton was twelve years old, he was sent to St. Paul's School, and he studied so busily that he often sat over his books till late at night. "From my twelfth year," he says in one of his pamphlets, "I scarcely ever went to bed before midnight, which was the first cause of injury to my eyes."

At sixteen Milton went to Cambridge, where he studied Latin, Greek, Hebrew, French, and Italian. One of the poems written during his college life was the *Hymn on the Morning of Christ's Nativity*. Looking out on a Christmas morning on the snow-covered earth, and on the sky, where the stars were still shining, the silence of the early dawn reminded him of the night when Christ was born. He says:

"Peaceful was the night
Wherein the Prince of Light
His reign of peace upon the earth began."

When Milton left college he went to his father's country-house at Horton, a pleasant little village in Buckinghamshire, where he spent five years, reading, studying, and sometimes writing. At that time he composed two beautiful poems, *L'Allegro* — Mirth, or the Cheerful Man — and *Il Penseroso* — Melancholy, or the Grave and Thoughtful Man — and a masque entitled *Comus*.

L'Allegro shows the bright, sunshiny side of nature; early morning with the lark's song, the sound of hound and horn in the woods, the whistle of the ploughman, the milkmaid's merry note, and later on the merry church-bells, the meeting of friends, the dance, the telling of fairy stories, or a visit to the playhouse if:

"Sweetest Shakespeare, Fancy's child,
Warble his native wood-notes wild."

Il Penseroso describes the calm silence of evening, and the joy of solitary studies.

Comus was written for the children of the Earl of Bridgewater, a neighbour of the Miltons at Horton. The play shows the Lady Alice, the Earl's eldest daughter, and her two brothers wandering through a forest. The sister gets separated from her brothers and falls into the hands of Comus, the son of Bacchus and Circe. She is at length delivered by the water-nymph Sabrina, the spirit of the Severn.

The charm which bound Milton to Horton was broken by the death of his mother, and he started on his Continental tour in 1638. At Florence he visited Galileo, who was at that time a prisoner of the Inquisition in his own house. Then he went to Rome and Naples, and he meant to go to Greece; but hearing of the civil commotions in England, he gave up his visit to Greece and hurried home. "I thought it base," he says, "to be travelling for amusement abroad while my fellow-citizens were fighting for liberty at home."

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In London, Milton took a pretty garden-house, and here he educated the two sons of his sister and some other pupils, "the sons of gentlemen who were his intimate friends". He taught the boys daily and liked the work very much. At that time he wrote most of his prose works in the cause of liberty and the Parliament.

In 1643 Milton married Mary Powell, the daughter of a Royalist. Mary was only eighteen, and she found her husband's quiet, busy life so dull that she returned to her father's house; but when the King's cause failed and old Mr. Powell was nearly ruined, Milton took not only his wife, but also her parents to his home, and they seem to have lived very happily together until Mary died, leaving him with three motherless girls, one just a baby.

Meanwhile the struggle between Charles I. and the Parliament had ended in the execution of the King. Soon after Salmasius of Leyden, one of the greatest scholars of Europe, wrote a book accusing the English people of murdering their King; and at the request of the Council of State, Milton replied to this book in his *Defence of the People of England*, which was also written in Latin. About that time he was appointed Cromwell's foreign or Latin Secretary. His fame now spread beyond his own country, and in the eyes of foreigners Cromwell and Milton — the man of action and the man of thought — were the representative men of the English Commonwealth.

About four years after the death of his first wife, Milton, who had become totally blind, married

a second time. Though he never saw his young wife, he loved her dearly; but when they had only been married one year, Catherine Milton died.

In 1660, two years after the death of Cromwell, a Stuart King, Charles II., was brought back to England. Milton was now in great danger; his *Defence of the People of England* was burnt by the hangman, and he was imprisoned for a short time; but he was released by order of the House of Commons. It was about this time that he married his third wife, and took a small house in Bunhill Fields, which was his home for the rest of his life. He was often helpless from attacks of gout; but, in spite of his blindness and pain, he now wrote his greatest work, *Paradise Lost*. He gave the manuscript to his Latin reader, who was a Quaker, and when the young man returned the poem he said pleasantly, "Thou hast said much here of Paradise Lost; what hast thou to say of Paradise Found?" — This question led to Milton's writing *Paradise Regained*, in which he describes the temptation of Christ in the wilderness and his victory over Satan, by which he won back for mankind a chance of Paradise.

Milton also wrote many fine sonnets and a dramatic poem called *Samson Agonistes*, — that is "the Wrestler". The hero of the poem, the Samson of the Bible, who is shorn of his strength and struggling against the Philistines, is the representative of the Puritan party. The Puritans had fallen like Samson; they were imprisoned and

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persecuted; but, like Samson, they had done their work.

Milton's last days were spent simply and peacefully. He died in 1674. Macaulay calls John Milton "the glory of English literature, the champion and martyr of English liberty."

3. Paradise Lost.

Paradise Lost is an epic poem. It is written in blank verse and divided into twelve books. The subject of the poem is the fall of man and his expulsion from Paradise. Milton begins his poem with an invocation to the Muse:

"Of Man's first disobedience, and the fruit
Of that forbidden tree, whose mortal taste
Brought death into the world, and all our woe,
With loss of Eden, till one greater Man
Restore us, and regain the blissful seat,
Sing, Heavenly Muse, that on the secret top
Of Oreb, or of Sinai, didst inspire
That shepherd who first taught the chosen seed
In the beginning how the Heavens and Earth
Rose out of Chaos."

Then he utters a prayer for help to the Holy Ghost:

"What in me is dark,
Illumine; what is low, raise and support;
That to the height of this great argument
I may assert Eternal Providence,
And justify the ways of God to men."

The poem begins with a scene in hell, where the angels who had rebelled against God were

lying stunned and confounded on a lake of fire. Satan was the first to recover; he roused the fallen angels around him, and told them of a report in heaven that God meant to create a new world. He suggested that they should endeavour to find this world, and should there carry on war against God.

"For who can think submission? War then, war,
Open or understood, must be resolved."

It was decided that Satan should undertake to find the new world. He flew towards the gates of hell, which were guarded by two horrible shapes, Sin and Death. They opened the gates, and Satan passed out into a realm where there was neither law nor order, and where he found the throne of Chaos, with dark Night beside him as his Queen. He flew on till he beheld the first gleam of light. At length he saw the sun and the gate of heaven in the distance, and at this sight he fell into many doubts and passions, fear, envy, and despair:

"Me miserable! which way shall I fly
Infinite wrath, and infinite despair?
Which way I fly is hell; myself am hell;
And in the lowest deep a lower deep
Still threatening to devour me opens wide,
To which the hell I suffer seems a heaven . . .

So farewell, hope, and with hope farewell, fear,
Farewell, remorse: all good to me is lost;
Evil, be thou my good; by thee at least
Divided empire with Heaven's King I hold;
By thee, and more than half perhaps will reign;
As Man ere long, and this new world shall know."

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God had seen Satan winging his way towards the new-created world. He knew his designs, and he knew that man would fall by them; but Messiah, the Son of God, offered to atone for the sins of man by His own suffering and death, and God accepted the offer.

Satan reached the earth and entered Paradise. He flew to the tree of Life, where he sat "like a cormorant". Here he saw all the loveliness of Paradise, and the happiness and innocence of Adam and Eve, and he came near enough to hear their conversation.

Eve's Love for Adam.

"With thee conversing, I forget all time,
All seasons and their change; all please alike.
Sweet is the breath of Morn, her rising sweet,
With charm of earliest birds; pleasant the Sun
When first on this delightful land he spreads
His orient beams, on herb, tree, fruit, and flower,
Glistring with dew; fragrant the fertile earth
After soft showers; and sweet the coming on
Of grateful evening mild, then silent Night
With this her solemn bird and this fair moon,
And these the gems of Heaven, her starry train:
But neither breath of Morn when she ascends
With charm of earliest birds, nor rising Sun
On this delightful land, nor herb, fruit, flower,
Glistring with dew, nor fragrance after showers,
Nor grateful evening mild, nor silent Night
With this her solemn bird, nor walk by moon
Or glittering starlight without thee is sweet."

On the following morning God sent Raphael to warn Adam, and the Archangel told him of the rebellion of Satan and the war in heaven; how, on the third day of the battle, the Son of God came forth, and before His divine majesty the rebel angels fled towards the crystal walls of heaven; how they opened, and "headlong themselves they threw down from the verge of Heaven." — "Nine days they fell, and hell at last received them." Then Raphael returned to heaven.

Satan, who had been driven from Paradise by the angels, returned at night, and took the shape of a serpent. In the morning he saw Eve alone near the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. He tempted her to eat the fruit of this tree, and "forth-reaching to the fruit, she plucked — she ate." Gathering a bough laden with apples, she returned to her husband, and he too ate the forbidden fruit. The effect of the sin was seen immediately; their innocence and peace of mind were gone. The Archangel Michael was sent with a band of Cherubim to drive Adam and Eve from the garden of Eden. Michael revealed to Adam the future history of the human race in order to show him that Paradise was not lost to man for ever, "and so sent them forth, though sorrowing, yet in peace."

VII. The Age of Dryden.

With Dryden, a new age both of poetry and prose begins. Matthew Arnold describes this period as the age, not of imagination, but of prose and reason, and calls Dryden its glorious founder and Pope its great high priest. French literature and style came into fashion in England at the Restoration, when Charles II. and many of his courtiers returned from their exile in France; and the results of French influence were felt more or less in the English literature of that time. The greatest of the writers who were carried away by the new fashion was John Dryden.

1. John Dryden.

Born 1631. — Died 1700.

John Dryden was the son of a Puritan clergyman. His first verses were written in 1658, and are called *Heroic Stanzas on the Death of Oliver Cromwell.* One of the stanzas is:

> "His grandeur he derived from heaven alone;
> For he was great ere fortune made him so;
> And wars, like mists that rise against the sun,
> Made him but greater seem, not greater grow."

It seems strange that Dryden's next poem should be one of welcome to Charles II. on his restoration. He entitled it *Astræa Redux* — the Returned Goddess of Justice.

The year of the Plague in London (1665), and that of the Great Fire (1666) were spent by Dryden and his wife, who was the daughter of the Earl of Berkshire, at her father's country-seat. Here Dryden wrote his historical poem *Annus Mirabilis* — the Wonderful Year — on the events of the year 1666. He also began to write plays, and during his life he produced nearly thirty, but not one masterpiece.

In 1670 Dryden was created Poet Laureate, and ten years after he composed the most brilliant of all his works, his *Absalom and Achitophel.* Sir Walter Scott says, "It is said to have been undertaken at the command of Charles II., and, if so, no king was ever better obeyed." The Duke of Monmouth, the son of Charles II., had conspired with the Earl of Shaftesbury and other nobles, and their object was to exclude Charles's brother James, Duke of York, from the succession to the throne. Dryden's poem refers to these events. Absalom is Monmouth, the ungrateful son turning against his father; King David is Charles II., sorrowing for his son; Achitophel, the crafty counsellor of Absalom, is the Earl of Shaftesbury; Jerusalem is London.

After the accession of James II., Dryden became a Roman Catholic, and in the following year he wrote a long fable, *The Hind and the Panther*, in defence of his adopted religion. The "milk-white

Hind, immortal and unchanged", represents the Roman Catholic Church; the panther, "the noblest next the Hind, and fairest creature of the spotted kind", is the Church of England; the lion trying to protect the hind is James II. In this strange poem the animals are made to walk and talk together, discussing religious questions.

When William and Mary came to the English throne, Dryden lost his office as Poet Laureate. At that time his best-known poem was written; it was the *Ode for St. Cecilia's Day*, generally called *Alexander's Feast*. It shows the power of music over the great conqueror Alexander. This poem was set to music by Handel.

Dryden also wrote an *Essay on Dramatic Poetry;* he was called the "Prince of Critics", and the young poets in London looked upon him with reverence. "Glorious John" sat as a king in Will's coffee-house in his own arm-chair, set ready in the warmest corner in winter, and in the balcony in summer. He died in 1700, and was buried in Westminster Abbey by the side of Chaucer.

2. John Locke.

Born 1632. — Died 1704.

Dryden has been called the founder of an "age of prose and reason", and the philosopher Locke may share this honour with him. He was educated at Oxford, where he studied Bacon's works and began himself to seek for knowledge through observation and experiment. After leaving Oxford Locke went to live with his friend Lord Ashley,

afterwards Earl of Shaftesbury — the Achitophel of Dryden's satire — in order to take charge of Lord Ashley's only son, a sickly boy of seventeen. Afterwards Locke was commissioned to find a suitable wife for this youth, and he managed this business very well. When Shaftesbury was banished from England, because he had conspired with Monmouth to exclude the Duke of York from the throne, Locke accompanied him to Holland. Lord Shaftesbury died in exile. When William and Mary came to the throne, Locke returned to England in one of the ships sent to bring over Queen Mary. He was given a government office, and he lived very happily with some friends in Essex.

In Holland, Locke wrote his *Letters on Toleration*, showing that "the rule of Christ's Church should be love." In Essex he completed his greatest work, *An Essay concerning Human Understanding*. In one of his most interesting books, which is entitled, *Some Thoughts concerning Education*, he says:

"The little ones are taught to be proud of their clothes before they can put them on."

"Children love to be treated as rational creatures, more than is imagined."

"Children generally hate to be idle; all the care is then that their busy humour should be constantly employed in something of use to them."

3. John Bunyan.

Born 1628. — Died 1688.

Next to the Bible, *The Pilgrim's Progress* is said to be the book of which the greatest number

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of copies have been printed in England. The author of this wonderful work was John Bunyan, the son of a tinker, and a tinker himself till he reached manhood. He was born at the village of Elstow, one mile from Bedford. When he was sixteen, he enlisted as a soldier in the Civil Wars, but whether on the King's side or that of the Parliament is quite uncertain. At the age of nineteen he married a young woman who was as poor as himself. Her father had given her two religious books, and she induced her husband to read these books as well as the Bible, and to go to church with her. He now amended his life and became a member of the Baptist Congregation at Bedford, and three years later he began to preach in the villages of Bedfordshire, the common people flocking in crowds to hear him. After the Restoration he was arrested for holding field meetings, and as he could not be induced to promise that he would give up preaching, he was thrown into Bedford jail, where he remained for twelve years.

In prison Bunyan earned a little money for the support of his wife and children by making bootlaces, which he was allowed to sell outside the prison door to passers-by. There he stood on fine days with his blind daughter. The townsfolk not only bought his laces for pity's sake, but often stopped to have a talk with him. Within the prison too he had sympathizing friends, and he was allowed to go out for a few hours at a time.

At length, when the Declaration of Indulgence once more allowed freedom to all preachers, Bunyan was released from jail, and became minister of the Baptist church in Bedford. He was often asked to go to larger churches in London, but he would not leave his own people. He met his death when on an errand of mercy. He was going from Reading to London after making peace between a father and son who had quarrelled, when he was caught in a heavy rain-shower. The chill brought on fever, and he died at his London friend's house in 1688, a few months before William of Orange landed. He was buried in Bunhill Fields, where Milton used to live.

While in prison, Bunyan wrote and published several little volumes, of which the most interesting is his spiritual biography *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners.* It is generally thought too that it was in this time of quiet and retirement that he wrote the first part of *The Pilgrim's Progress from this World to the World that is to Come,* which is considered the finest prose allegory in the English language. Macaulay says, "Bunyan is as decidedly the first of allegorists as Demosthenes is the first of orators, or Shakespeare the first of dramatists."

4. The Pilgrim's Progress.

From highest heaven a voice has proclaimed vengeance against the City of Destruction, where lives a sinner of the name of Christian. Terrified, he rises up amid the jeers of his neighbours, and departs, for fear of being devoured by the fire which is to consume the criminals. A helpful man,

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Evangelist, shows him the right road. A treacherous man, Worldly Wiseman, tries to turn him aside. He advances bravely across the dirty water and the slippery mud of the Slough of Despond, and reaches the Strait Gate, where a wise Interpreter instructs him, and points out the way to the Heavenly City. He passes before a cross, and the heavy burden of sins which he carried on his back is loosened and falls off. He painfully climbs the steep Hill of Difficulty, and reaches a great castle, where Watchful, the guardian, gives him in charge to his good daughters Piety and Prudence, who arm him against the monsters of hell. He finds his road barred by one of the demons, Apollyon, who bids him abjure obedience to the Heavenly King. After a long fight he defeats him. Now the way grows narrow, the shades fall thicker, sulphurous flames rise along the road: he is in the Valley of the Shadow of Death. Christian passes it and arrives at the town of Vanity, a vast fair of business, deceits, and shows, which he walks by with lowered eyes, not wishing to take part in its festivities and falsehoods. The people of the place beat him, throw him into prison, condemn him as a traitor and a rebel, and burn his companion Faithful. Escaped from their hands, he falls into those of Giant Despair, who beats him, leaves him in a poisonous dungeon without food, and, giving him daggers and cords, advises him to rid himself from so many misfortunes.

At last Christian, accompanied by Hopeful, reaches the land of Beulah, that is the sweet, calm

close of a heavenly life on earth. They see the Celestial City, but to enter it they have to cross the River of Death. They pass through the dark, unknown waters and gain the other side, where two "Shining Ones" are waiting for them.

The Celestial City.

"Now I saw in my dream that these two men went in at the gate; and lo, as they entered, they were transfigured, and they had raiment put on that shone like gold. There were also that met them with harps and crowns, and gave to them the harps to praise withal, and the crowns in token of honour.

"Then I heard in my dream that all the bells in the city rang again for joy, and that it was said unto them: 'Enter ye into the joy of our Lord.' I also heard the men themselves, that they sang with a loud voice, saying: 'Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power be to Him that sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb, for ever and ever.'"

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VIII. The Age of Pope.

The early part of the eighteenth century, the Age of Pope, Swift, Addison, and Defoe, has often been compared to the Augustan Age of Roman literature with its Virgil and Horace, and to the Age of Leo X. with its Ariosto. It has been called the "Classic Age of Queen Anne", and the "Augustan Age of English Literature". Little encouragement was given to literature by William III., Anne, or George I.; but some of the chief statesmen of the day were themselves men of letters, and became generous patrons of learning.

At that time English verse received the keenest polish in the poetry of Pope, a poetry in which so much care was bestowed on pointed language, smooth versification, and clever rhyming, that the spirit of poetry almost disappeared from it.

The earlier part of the eighteenth century was a period of much vigour in prose literature. With the French influence there had sprung up a taste for short, clever essays, written with much finish of style, and dealing with subjects of general interest in a clear form and with a vein of humour or satire running through them. This age also

saw the first important English newspapers and the earliest English novels.

1. Alexander Pope.

Born 1688. — Died 1744.

Alexander Pope was born in the year of the Revolution, 1688. He was twelve years old when Dryden died on May Day 1700, and he had persuaded his father to take him once to see the great poet surrounded by his admiring circle in Will's coffee-house.

Pope's father was a linen-draper and a Roman Catholic. At the accession of William and Mary, severe laws were revived against Romanists, and soon after the birth of his son, Pope's father retired from business, and went to live in a pretty cottage on the borders of Windsor Forest. Little Alexander was delicate and deformed, but he was tenderly loved and cared for. His devotion to his mother was one of the best features in Pope's character. He called her "the best of mothers and most loving of women." The child was too weakly to be sent to a great public school, and his first teachers were Roman Catholic priests.

When Pope was only sixteen he wrote his *Pastorals*. His first great work was a poem entitled *Essay on Criticism*. In 1714 Pope published *The Rape of the Lock*, which many people regard as his masterpiece.

About this time he became the friend of Jonathan Swift, the famous Dean of St. Patrick's,

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Dublin. He had formerly been a Whig, but now Swift's attraction drew him into the Tory camp. Afterwards Pope quarrelled with most of his friends, even with Addison; but to Swift he was faithful.

In 1713 Pope began his greatest literary undertaking, the translation of Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. The success of this work made him a comparatively rich man, and he bought a pretty villa at Twickenham, where he spent the remainder of his days. Pope was very sickly and helpless, he speaks sadly of "that long disease, my life"; and his weakness made him irritable and spiteful. He had many personal enemies, and tried to crush them all by a vigorous satire, the *Dunciad* or *Iliad of Dunces*, in which he ridiculed many of the inferior writers of the age. The poem is dedicated to the "Goddess of Dulness", who chooses the poet Cibber to be "King of the Dunces".

Pope's last great work was the *Essay on Man*, which was intended, like Milton's *Paradise Lost*, to "justify the ways of God to men". It is really a system of ethics in verse. It contains the well-known lines:

"Know then thyself, presume not God to scan;
The proper study of mankind is man."

2. The Rape of the Lock.

The Rape of the Lock, which Addison called "a delicious little thing", is a playful mock epic, suggested by the following incident: A young nobleman, Lord Petre, was the lover of Miss

Arabella Fermor, a court beauty. One day he snipped off a curl of her hair, and the two families were so indignant that, for a long time, there was a deadly feud between them. Pope wanted to reconcile them by his poem, which he dedicated to Miss Fermor, and he succeeded.

In the poem Miss Fermor is called "Belinda", Lord Petre, "the Baron". Belinda joins a water party on the Thames and is attended by the Fairy Ariel and many other sylphs. They reach Hampton Court, where the company play cards and drink coffee,

"Coffee, which makes the politician wise,
And see through all things with his half-shut eyes."

Then one of the ladies, called Clarissa, hands a pair of scissors to the Baron. He cannot resist the temptation to cut off one of Belinda's curls, and just as she bends over her cup, he puts forth the "two-edged weapon":

"Even then, before the fatal engine closed,
A wretched Sylph too fondly interposed;
Fate urged the shears, and cut the Sylph in twain,
(But airy substance soon unites again).
The meeting points the sacred hair dissever
From the fair head, for ever, and for ever!"

Very merrily Pope describes the anger of the lady and the quarrel between the friends of both families. The tress of hair is nowhere to be found, for it has been carried away by the breeze, and has become a star:

"This lock the muse shall consecrate to fame,
And 'midst the stars inscribe Belinda's name."

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3. Jonathan Swift.

Born 1667. — Died 1745.

Jonathan Swift was born in Dublin of English parents. He studied at Trinity College, Dublin, and then he acted for several years as secretary to Sir William Temple at Moor Park in Surrey, Lady Temple being a distant relation of Swift's mother. Lady Temple had a companion, Mrs. Johnson, whose little daughter Esther was about six years old when Swift came to Moor Park. He became the child's playfellow and teacher. He called her "Stella", or star, and through the long years of his troubled life he remained her guardian and teacher, and she became more and more the clear, bright star of his life, shining through the dark gloom that so often clouded his mind. It is supposed that he married her privately when he had been appointed Dean of St. Patrick's, but they never lived in the same house, nor would he speak to her except when there was a third person present. Swift's life was so dark and sad because, for many years, he felt the cloud of madness hanging over him.

In 1695 Swift entered the Church and obtained a small living in Ireland. At that time he published the *Tale of a Tub*, a satirical allegory, in which the three great religious parties of the time are described as three brothers. By "Peter" is meant the Roman Catholic Church, "Jack" represents the Presbyterians, and "Martin" the Church of England.

Until that time Swift had been a Whig in politics, but now he sided with the Tories, because he thought that they would give him promotion. He hoped to become a bishop, but he was only appointed Dean of St. Patrick's, Dublin.

In Dublin Swift wrote his best-known book — *Gulliver's Travels*. He went to England to publish this book and stayed with Pope at his villa in Twickenham, but he was recalled to Ireland by Stella's dangerous illness. Soon afterwards she died, and all that had brightened Swift's life went out of it. His own health was failing, and soon the madness he had dreaded came over him. For four years he lived on, till, in 1745, he passed away, and the long misery of his life was over.

4. Gulliver's Travels.

This book, like *Robinson Crusoe*, professes to have been written by a shipwrecked sailor. Lemuel Gulliver is cast ashore on an island which appears to him uninhabited. He stretches himself on the grass and falls asleep. When he awakes he finds himself fastened down by a number of threads, and he sees, to his astonishment, a little man not six inches high walking over his breast. Presently as many as forty of these creatures begin to walk over him. These are the Lilliputians.

Gulliver is taken to the court of the Emperor of Lilliput and is shown how the persons holding high office gain court favour. A fine piece of

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thread is stretched about two feet from the ground, and on this the little men, desirous to become great, dance their best; and he who jumps highest has any vacant office given to him. Gulliver was told that there were two dangers to the great Empire of Lilliput — a violent faction at home, and the probability of invasion from a powerful enemy abroad. The strife at home was caused by two parties, who contended violently whether high or low heels should be worn to their shoes. Besides the Lilliputians had a quarrel with the Kingdom of Blefuscu, and the question at issue was whether, in eating an egg, it should be broken at the larger end or the smaller. The Emperor of Lilliput had made an edict that eggs should be broken at the smaller end; but rather than conform to this usage, 11,000 persons had suffered death, and many Big-Endians had left the country and found refuge at the court of Blefuscu.

The Voyage to Lilliput is a satirical picture of the court of George I.; the parties of the High-Heels and the Low-Heels are the Tories and the Whigs, and the Big-Endians and the Little-Endians are the Roman Catholics and the Protestants.

The second part of Gulliver's Travels, the Voyage to Brobdingnag, is very amusing. In Brobdingnag he sees a man as tall as a church steeple, who takes him home to his little daughter Glumdalclitch, who "is very good-natured, and not above forty feet high, being little for her age." She is delighted with her new doll, and puts him

to sleep in her doll's cradle. He is taken to the court by his young mistress, and suffers a great deal from his smallness. He is frightened nearly to death by hailstones as big as cannon-balls; apples as large as barrels fall upon him; a pet dog, nearly as big as a bull, carries Gulliver off in his mouth; the birds in the garden steal his cake from him; and one day a monkey carries him to the house-roof. At last a bird carries off Gulliver, house and all, and drops him into the sea, where he is picked up by a passing ship.

The third and fourth parts of the *Travels* are not nearly so pleasing. In them Swift showed how bitterly he hated his fellow-creatures.

5. Joseph Addison. — Richard Steele.

Born 1672. — Died 1719. Born 1672. — Died 1729.

Joseph Addison's father was Dean of Lichfield. When the boy was thirteen he was sent to the Charterhouse School in London, and there he met Richard Steele. The two boys were born in the same year, and they became life-long friends and fellow-workers. After the battle of Blenheim Addison wrote a poem called *The Campaign*, in which he praised the Duke of Marlborough. These praises gained him the office of Under-Secretary of State.

About that time Steele started the *Tatler*, a little penny paper, for which Addison wrote forty essays; and soon after Addison and Steele together started the *Spectator*, which was to be written "for the use of the good people of England".

"Addison was undoubtedly one of the most popular men of his time. Those who enjoyed the privilege of hearing his familiar conversation declared with one voice that it was superior even to his writings; even the malignant Pope was forced to own that there was a charm in Addison's talk which could be found nowhere else. Every evening his admirers assembled around him at Button's, his favourite coffee-house, and he sometimes kept a few friends listening and laughing round a table, till the clock of St. Paul's, Covent Garden, struck four."

In 1716 Addison married Charlotte, Countess of Warwick, whose son, the young Earl, was his ward. Addison had been suffering for some time from asthma, and in 1719 he died. When he was on his death-bed he sent for his step-son, the Earl of Warwick, who was a wild and thoughtless youth. "See," he said to him, "how a Christian can die."

Addison's writings mark an era in the history of English prose; he wrote a simple and unaffected yet graceful and charming style, and Macaulay calls him "the greatest of English essayists". His best essays were contributed to the *Spectator*, and in one of the first numbers he says:

> "I shall endeavour to enliven morality with wit, and to temper wit with morality. It was said of Socrates that he brought Philosophy from heaven to inhabit among men: and I shall be ambitious to have it said of me that I have brought Philosophy out of closets and libraries, schools and colleges, to dwell in clubs and assemblies, at tea-tables, and in coffee-houses."

Richard Steele laid the foundation of his fame by starting the *Tatler*, for which he was the chief writer. The *Spectator*, to which Addison contributed about half the numbers, had the same object as the *Tatler*, the entertainment of the town by means of short essays on life and manners; but it took a higher tone. It professed to contain the adventures and reflections of an imaginary club, of which Mr. Spectator is the central figure, and Sir Roger de Coverley, Sir Andrew Freeport, Captain Sentry, Will Honeycomb, and Will Wimble, more or less companion members, each representing a different interest. The effect of the *Spectator* in purifying the character and improving the manners of the age can hardly be over-estimated. While these periodicals show Steele's interest in the cause of public morality, his Letters reveal his own private life. They show him to have been honest, warm-hearted, and impulsive, continually slipping into acts of imprudence and folly, and continually vowing amendment.

Steele was a Whig, and when, on the accession of George I. in 1714, his party got into power, his day of political reward arrived. He was knighted, entered Parliament, and received the appointment of Supervisor of Drury Lane. Greater honours came to Addison; but the friends, whom literature had united in closer bonds, were now to be separated by political jealousies. On the death of Addison in 1719, Steele's generous heart smote him for his part in the estrangement, and he bitterly expressed regret for the cause of it.

Steele spent the six last years of his life in obscurity in Wales.

6. Daniel Defoe.

Born 1661. — Died 1731.

The first of the great English novelists was Daniel Defoe. He was born in London in 1661 — one year after the restoration of Charles II. In 1685 he fought for the Duke of Monmouth at Sedgemoor, and after the battle he escaped and spent two years in Spain and Portugal. When he came back he found that James II. was setting aside the laws of England to benefit the Roman Catholics. He at once boldly wrote against this, as he would against whatever he thought wrong and unjust. He was fearless all through his life. In 1703 he wrote a bold and very clever pamphlet entitled *The Shortest Way with the Dissenters*, in which he says, "Let them all be sent as a body out of the country, and all their ministers be hanged, and then every one in England will belong to the one Church." Of course the pamphlet was only a rough piece of irony, because Defoe was a Dissenter himself; but both the Dissenters and the Church people thought he was in earnest. The House of Commons ordered the pamphlet to be burned by the hangman and its author was fined, imprisoned, and ordered to stand three times in the pillory. The sentence was carried out; but the pillory was made an occasion of triumph for the victim, for the people took his side; they cheered him, and many ladies brought

him roses and talked to him. Afterwards he wrote a song called *Hymn to the Pillory*, and in Newgate he took to writing more busily than ever about politics.

In the following year he was released on condition that he should give up political writing for seven years, and now he began to write only to amuse his readers. When he was nearly sixty years old he published the book which made him famous — *Robinson Crusoe.*

The story of *Robinson Crusoe* is founded on the real adventures of Alexander Selkirk, who spent many years in solitude on the island of San Juan Fernandes. Crusoe in his desert island is no miserable castaway, but a brave man, fighting the good fight of faith under the most trying circumstances; able to say at last, "I thought I lived very happily in all things, excepting that of society." At length his solitude is broken by his finding Friday, a savage left upon the island. He begins to teach and train this man not only to help him in his work, but to know God and look to heaven, so that he could say, "This savage was now a good Christian, a much better than I; though I have reason to hope, and bless God for it, that we were equally penitent and comforted."

7. Anthony Ashley Cooper, Earl of Shaftesbury.

Born 1671. — Died 1713.

Lord Shaftesbury, the pupil of John Locke, was the grandson of the first Earl of Shaftesbury, the clever politician whom Dryden

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satirised as "Achitophel". Shaftesbury's greatest work is entitled *Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions, and Times*. He was a man of pure character and refined tastes, and he ranks as one of the most graceful and harmonious of the prose-writers of the eighteenth century; in ethics he sought to establish the theory of a separate moral sense by which the distinction of right from wrong is recognised.

8. Edward Young.

Born 1681. — Died 1765.

Edward Young, a clergyman of the Church of England, is the author of *Night Thoughts*, a religious poem written in blank verse, and divided into nine parts — each part containing the thoughts or reflections of a night. Its subjects are Life, Death, and Immortality. In dealing with such solemn themes, Young displays great power, and in some passages approaches Milton in grandeur and sublimity.

From Night Thoughts.

"Tired Nature's sweet restorer, balmy Sleep!
He, like the world, his ready visit pays
Where Fortune smiles; the wretched he forsakes:
Swift on his downy pinions flies from woe,
And lights on lids unsullied with a tear."

IX. The Age of Johnson.

In the second half of the eighteenth century Dr. Johnson exercised the same sway in the literary world which Pope and Addison possessed in the early half. The influence of the formal poetry of Pope was still seen in that of Johnson and many of his contemporaries, and Coleridge describes the poetry of the period as "translations of prose thoughts into poetic language". But towards the end of this period we find a return to true feeling and simplicity; Thomson and Cowper went back to nature for their subjects and their inspiration, and Robert Burns expressed the varied emotions of his rich mind in wonderful lyrics.

At the time when English poetry had sunk to its lowest level, the first great novels were written, and the historians Hume, Robertson, and Gibbon published their admirable works.

The art of literary criticism also made great progress in this period, and Dr. Johnson was its acknowledged high-priest.

1. Samuel Johnson.

Born 1709. — Died 1784.

Samuel Johnson, the critic, poet, novelist, and lexicographer, was the son of a poor bookseller

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at Lichfield. At the age of nineteen he went to Oxford; but illness or poverty caused him to leave the University before he had taken his degree. On the death of his father he became an usher in a school. At that time he made the acquaintance of a widow, Mrs. Porter, and when he was about twenty-seven, he married this lady. She was twenty years older than he, but he was most sincerely attached to his "dear Tetty". Mrs. Johnson had a little money, and with this Johnson started a school for boys near Lichfield; but he had only three scholars, and at the end of a year and a half the school had to be given up. Johnson now resolved to go up to London and work his way there, while his wife stayed behind at Lichfield. One of his pupils, David Garrick, who afterwards became the greatest actor of the time, accompanied him.

Johnson's life in London was for many years a hard and almost hopeless struggle with misery and want; however he told no one how much he suffered. "I hate a grumbler!" he used to say. But we are told that, in later and happier years, when Dr. Johnson one day read his own satire *The Vanity of Human Wishes*, in which the life of a poor scholar is painted, he burst into a passion of tears. He worked busily at translation and wrote for the *Gentleman's Magazine;* but still, work as he would, he often had to go dinnerless and supperless.

His first work of note was a poem on London. He then began his *Dictionary of the English Language*, and it took him eight years to finish it. Meanwhile he started the *Rambler*, a periodical like the *Spectator*. Soon after his wife died, and he never ceased to mourn her loss. Several years after her death he wrote, "I have less pleasure in any good that befalls me because she does not partake it."

When his mother died he wrote a story called *Rasselas, Prince of Abyssinia*, to pay her funeral expenses. This is a story of a prince who lived in the "Happy Valley", where he was shut out from all the care and misery of the world. But he was not satisfied, and at last he and his sister escaped, and, with Imlac, an old philosopher, they travelled about and saw the world. At length Rasselas and his sister were happy to return to their secluded valley, for they had found out "that there is sin and misery everywhere, and that man must look beyond this world for perfect happiness."

Soon after the accession of George III. Johnson received the happy news that the King had conferred on him a pension of £ 300 a year. He did not write much after this, and the *Lives of the Poets* formed the last of his important works. Though Johnson wrote little during his later years, he talked a great deal, and his influence over the society of the day arose not so much from any published writings of his as from the charm and power of his conversation. Macaulay says, "When he talked, he clothed his wit in forcible and natural expressions, but when he wrote for publication, he did his sentences out of English into

"Johnsonese". His style was so stiff and pompous that Goldsmith said to him, "If you were to write a fable about little fishes, Doctor, you would make the little fishes talk like whales."

Johnson was never so happy as when sitting in his great arm-chair in the midst of his friends and laying down the law on literary and social questions in his own dogmatic way. Some of the members of the Literary Club, which he had founded, were Oliver Goldsmith, Edward Gibbon, David Garrick, Sir Joshua Reynolds, the great painter, and James Boswell, a Scotchman, who had come to London to see the great men of the time, especially Dr. Johnson. Boswell talked little but listened to every word the doctor said, occasionally scribbling down some notes; and in the evening before going to bed, he wrote down what he had heard. Thus he was afterwards able to write a biography of the doctor, and his *Life of Johnson* is still held to be the best biography in the English language. Edmund Burke, another member of the Literary Club, says, "Johnson appears far greater in Boswell's books than in his own."

2. The Novelists.

Samuel Richardson (b. 1689 — d. 1761) was a printer and bookseller in London. He was kind to struggling authors, and Johnson and Goldsmith were among those whom he befriended. His first novel *Pamela, or Virtue Rewarded*, was published when the author was fifty years old.

This novel consists entirely of letters; it is the story of an innocent girl left unprotected by the death of her mistress, and winning, by her virtue and constancy, the heart of her young master, whose wife she becomes.

Clarissa Harlowe is considered Richardson's masterpiece. It is the story of a beautiful and accomplished young lady, who falls a victim to the plots of Lovelace. Rousseau declared, "There never has been, in any language in the world, a romance like *Clarissa*."

Henry Fielding (b. 1707 — d. 1754) was the son of a general who had fought under Marlborough. He led a wild, jovial, and reckless life. In 1754 his health broke down completely, and he sailed for Lisbon to try the effect of a warmer climate, but he died there in the autumn of the same year.

Fielding's first novel, *The Adventures of Joseph Andrews*, was intended as a roguish satire upon *Pamela*, and Joseph is supposed to be the brother of Richardson's heroine.

Tom Jones is considered the greatest of Fielding's novels; but it contains much that is vulgar and coarse. In the heroine of the story, Sophia, he portrays the beauty, gentleness, and goodness of his wife. Fielding's novels are "bright, sparkling, and full of the liveliest humour".

Tobias Smollett (b. 1721 — d. 1771) belonged to an ancient Scotch family. For a time he was surgeon's mate on board a man-of-war, and in his first novel, *The Adventures of Roderick Random*, his own youthful experiences are pretty faithfully

portrayed. At Leghorn, where he went in quest of health, he wrote the last and best of all his works, *The Expedition of Humphrey Clinker*. "This novel," says Thackeray, "is, I do think, the most laughable story that has ever been written since the goodly art of novel-writing began."

Lawrence Sterne (b. 1713 — d. 1768) was born in Clonmel in Ireland. His father was an ensign in a regiment which had returned from Flanders but a few days before, the War of the Spanish Succession being then ended. The boy's early life is little more than a record of marches and countermarches from one garrison town to another. When he was about ten years old he ceased to follow the regiment and went to school. He became a clergyman of the Church of England, and obtained a living in Yorkshire. In 1760 he took the London world by storm with the first volumes of *Tristram Shandy*. "My rooms," he writes, "are filling every hour with great people of the first rank who strive who shall most honour me."

The real hero of *Tristram Shandy* is "Uncle Toby", and recollections of Sterne's father are doubtless blended in the portrait of this kind-hearted gentleman.

After spending several years in the south of France and in Italy, Sterne wrote his *Sentimental Journey through France and Italy*.

3. Oliver Goldsmith.

Born 1728. — Died 1774.

In the circle of celebrated men who surrounded the great Dr. Johnson, there was no one of so fine a genius as Oliver Goldsmith. He was born at Pallas, a very out-of-the-way Irish village, where his father, who was a clergyman, tried to live on £ 40 a year. Two years later the Reverend Charles Goldsmith obtained the richer living of Lissoy, and it is thought that Lissoy is the "Sweet Auburn, loveliest village of the plain," which the poet describes in his *Deserted Village*. In this Irish home little Oliver grew up in the midst of six or seven brothers and sisters. Here he began his fight with poverty, which was a life-long struggle, and here he also learned that kindly sympathy for others and that self-forgetful generosity which nothing could ever chill. "My father," he says, "loved all the world, and he fancied all the world loved him. We were taught to consider all the wants of mankind as our own, and were perfectly instructed in the art of giving away thousands before we were taught the more necessary art to earn a farthing."

The story of Goldsmith's life at school and college is one to call up tears and smiles. While he was still a child he was terribly marked by the small-pox, and he became the butt of many a coarse joke in consequence. At college a brutal tutor bullied him so that he ran away, and could hardly be prevailed upon to return. While Oliver was at Dublin University, his father died, and now

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he was poorer than ever. At last he took his degree, coming out last in the list, and then he spent three years at his mother's house in a kind of vagabond idleness. In 1752 his friends sent him to Edinburgh to study medicine, and two years later he passed over to Leyden to continue his studies. From here he started on his travels "with a guinea in his pocket, one shirt to his back, and a flute in his hand." In the *Vicar of Wakefield* he says:

"I had some knowledge of music with a tolerable voice, and now turned what was once my amusement into a means of subsistence. I passed among the harmless peasants of Flanders, and among such of the French as were poor enough to be very merry. Whenever I approached a peasant's house towards nightfall I played one of my most merry tunes, and that procured me not only a lodging, but subsistence for the next day."

After two years' absence Goldsmith landed at Dover, apparently without a penny, and he must have begged his way to London. A period of obscure misery now followed. He was ready to do anything for a living — teaching in schools, serving as a chemist's assistant, writing articles for reviews and other periodicals. Even after he had published his first great poem *The Traveller*, he never seemed to prosper; if he chanced to earn money he never rested until he had spent it. He had many friends, among them Dr. Johnson and Sir Joshua Reynolds, who loved him for his simplicity and childlike gaiety and kindliness. Nobody

ever called him Dr. Goldsmith, he was only known as "Goldy" or "Noll".

One day Johnson received an urgent message from Goldsmith begging him to come to him immediately. Johnson found that his poor friend had been arrested for his rent by order of his landlady. Presently Goldsmith produced a manuscript from his desk, and Johnson sat down to examine it. It was *The Vicar of Wakefield*, Goldsmith's immortal story. Perceiving at a glance the merits of the work, Johnson went out and sold it to a bookseller for £ 60, and Goldsmith's troubles were at an end for the time.

In 1770 Goldsmith's finest poem, *The Deserted Village*, appeared, and three years later his best comedy, *She Stoops to Conquer*, was acted for the first time. His fame was now well established, but he was so careless and generous that he was never free from money difficulties.

One day some of his friends amused themselves at dinner by making epitaphs on poor Goldy, and the most biting couplet was Garrick's:

"Here lies poet Goldsmith, for shortness called Noll,
Who wrote like an angel, and talked like poor Poll."

There was really a great contrast between his published works and the silly things he said. "He often talked nonsense and made himself the laughing-stock of his companions." Goldsmith's answer to these epitaphs was a bright and witty poem, *Retaliation*, in which he playfully sketched the characters of many members of Johnson's club.

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This was the last flash of his genius. He died in 1774 of a nervous fever brought on to some extent by distress of mind.

4. The Vicar of Wakefield.

This novel is a true picture of English country life in the eighteenth century. The original of Dr. Primrose, the Vicar of Wakefield, is Dr. Charles Goldsmith, the poet's father. The Vicar tells his own story. He begins with a description of his wife and family. "I chose my wife," he says, "as she did her wedding-gown, not for a fine, glossy surface, but for such qualities as would wear well." They had six children, George, Olivia and Sophia, Moses, and the two little ones, Dick and Bill. They were all equally "generous, credulous, simple, and inoffensive."

A long series of misfortunes and sorrows come to try the faith and patience of Dr. Primrose and his family; they have to leave their pleasant home at Wakefield, and go to live among simple farming people. They all work with patient cheerfulness and industry; in the morning the Vicar goes out to work in the fields with his son Moses, and they come home again when the day's work is over. In the summer evenings the family sit in an arbour beneath the hawthorn and honeysuckle, drink tea, and enjoy the view, while the little boys read, or the girls sing to the guitar. But one day Squire Thornhill with his stag-hounds invades the peace of the arbour, and from that day the quiet simplicity and happiness of the Vicar's household

threatens to vanish. The Squire carries off Olivia, one of the Vicar's daughters; Dr. Primrose sets out to find his child, and hurrying home with the good news that he has found her, he sees his house on fire. The wicked Squire imprisons the Vicar for debt; but even in prison Dr. Primrose finds a way of helping people — speaking to the prisoners of God's love and teaching them how to earn a little money by work. At last bright days return to the Vicar and his family, and he concludes his story, which is "full of the soft sunshine and tender beauty of domestic life," with the words: "It now only remained that my gratitude in good fortune should exceed my former submission in adversity."

5. The Historians.

David Hume (b. 1711. — d. 1776) was born in Edinburgh, and educated at the University of his native city. His *History of England* is so fresh, so simple, so interesting that it reads more like a play than a history. For a long time he was regarded as the greatest English historian.

William Robertson (b. 1721. — d. 1793) was a Scotchman like Hume. He was a clergyman and obtained a living in a small village in Southern Scotland, and in his country retirement history became his favourite study. In 1760 he published his *History of Scotland during the Reigns of Queen Mary and James VI. till his Accession to the Crown of England.* A few years later he was appointed Principal of the University of Edinburgh. At Edin-

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burgh he wrote the *History of the Reign of Charles V. of Germany*, and the *History of the Discovery of America*.

Edward Gibbon (b. 1737. — d. 1794) belonged to the circle of famous men who surrounded Goldsmith. While at the University of Oxford, he became a Roman Catholic, and his father now placed him in the house of a Protestant clergyman at Lausanne. There he remained for five years, and he soon returned to the Protestant faith. At Lausanne he met the beautiful Susan Curchod, to whom he became engaged; but the elder Gibbon would not hear of such a connection, and the engagement was broken off. The lady afterwards became the wife of Necker, the famous French minister, and the mother of Madame de Staël. In years to come she and Gibbon often met, no longer as lovers, but as attached friends.

In 1770 Gibbon settled in London, and began to write his great book, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. Twelve years after he resolved to make Lausanne his home once more, and he took a house overlooking the Lake of Geneva. In this pleasant retreat the last volumes of his history were written. It embraces, exclusive of a sketch of Roman history from the time of Augustus, a period of more than thirteen centuries, that is from about 180 to 1453 A. D., and includes not only the decline of the Roman Empire, but the invasions of the Barbarians, the establishment of the Byzantine power, the rise of the European states, the foundation of Mahommedanism, and the

Crusades. It is the most complete historical work known to English literature.

Gibbon says in his *Autobiography*:

"It was at Rome on October 15, 1764, as I sat musing amidst the ruins of the Capitol, while the barefooted friars were singing vespers in the Temple of Jupiter, that the idea of writing the decline and fall of the city first started to my mind."

6. James Thomson.

Born 1700. — Died 1748.

James Thomson was one of the first poets of nature and life in the eighteenth century. He was born in a little village in the south of Scotland, and he spent his youth on the slopes of the Cheviot Hills. For some time he lived in Edinburgh as a student of divinity; then he went to London, where he published a poem called *Winter*, afterwards adding others on *Spring*, *Summer*, and *Autumn*. The four poems contain many fresh, bright pictures of country life during the different seasons of the year, and were called *The Seasons*. Some portions of Thomson's poems were set to music by Haydn in his oratorio *The Seasons*.

In later years Thomson wrote several plays, but they were not so successful as his poems. The short play of *Alfred* contains the well-known patriotic song, *Rule Britannia*.

The first stanza of *Rule Britannia* is:

"When Britain first, at Heaven's command,
Arose from out the azure main,
This was the charter of the land,
And guardian Angels sung this strain:

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Rule, Britannia, rule the waves,
Britons never shall be slaves."

7. William Cowper.

Born 1731. — Died 1800.

William Cowper was the son of a clergyman. He lost his mother when he was only six years old, but many years afterwards he could recall his childish grief at her death. When he was more than fifty years old his cousin sent him a picture of his mother, and then he wrote the beautiful poem *On the Receipt of my Mother's Picture.* The first lines are:

"O that those lips had language! Life hath passed
With me but roughly since I heard thee last.
Those lips are thine, — thy own sweet smile I see,
The same that oft in childhood solaced me;
Voice only fails, else how distinct they say,
'Grieve not, my child, chase all thy fears away!'"

After his mother's death the little lad was sent to a boarding-school, and was very miserable there. One of the big boys was cowardly enough to bully the sensitive child, and being timid and new to school life, he dared not defend himself nor tell any one what he was suffering. His terror of this boy was such that he never dared raise his eyes to his face, and in after-years could remember only the buckles he wore on his shoes. After a while his cruelty was found out, and he was expelled, and Cowper was taken from the school. At ten years of age he was sent to Westminster School, where he stayed till he was eighteen. After spending

a short time at home, he was articled to an attorney in London. He now spent most of his time with his cousins Theodora and Harriet, and these were the brightest and happiest days of his life. He confesses that they were "constantly employed from morning till night in giggling and making giggle." He fell in love with Theodora, but her father refused his consent to a union, and the lovers remained single all their lives. They never saw one another again.

In 1763 Major Cowper, a relation of his, offered him the office of Clerk of the Journals to the House of Lords; but when he found that he had to undergo an examination, he dreaded the prospect so much that his mind gave way. In his madness he tried to kill himself, and he had to be taken to an asylum, where he spent eighteen months. When he was well enough to leave the asylum he went to live in the country, and he met some very kind friends in the Reverend Mr. Unwin and his wife. An arrangement was made for him to board with them, and Mrs. Unwin became like a mother to Cowper. Until her death her home was a shelter for the sensitive poet. After a second fit of insanity she advised him to write some longer poems, which gave him an interest and hope in life, and the health of his mind improved more and more.

Cowper found another friend in Lady Austen, who was very lively and cheerful. One evening she told him the amusing story of *John Gilpin*, "a citizen of famous London town", and the next

morning he had put it into verse. Another time she urged him to write a long poem in blank verse. "What shall I write about?" he asked. "Oh, you can write upon anything," answered Lady Austen; "write a poem upon this *sofa*." Cowper took the subject she had set him, and called his poem *The Task*. The first book was on the *Sofa*; then he passed to the effect of luxury and the increase of wealth, and as he wrote, other thoughts arose in his mind. *The Task* is considered Cowper's greatest poem.

After the death of Mrs. Unwin the poet sank into a state of deep melancholy, from which he never recovered. He died in 1800.

From "The Task".

"Knowledge dwells
In heads replete with thoughts of other men;
Wisdom in minds attentive to their own.
Knowledge is proud that he has learned so much;
Wisdom is humble that he knows no more."

8. Thomas Percy.

Born 1729. — Died 1811.

Thomas Percy, a clergyman of the Church of England, was appointed Bishop of Dromore in 1782. He published various antiquarian works, chiefly with reference to the north of England; but he is best remembered for his great service to literature in collecting many ancient ballads, which he published in 1765 as *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*, and which did much to bring back

interest in the ancient native literature, and to usher in the revival of romanticism.

One of the ballads in Percy's *Reliques* is *Edward, Edward*, which Herder translated in his *Stimmen der Völker*.

9. James Macpherson.

Born 1736. — Died 1796.

James Macpherson, a Scotch poet, published *Fingal*, *Temora*, and other poems of an epic character, alleging that they were translations from the writings of a Gaelic poet of the third century, named Ossian. It has since been generally admitted that they are forgeries.

Fingal is an epic in six books; and one of the poems of which it consists, *The Songs of Selma*, was translated by Goethe and inserted in *Werther's Leiden*. The opening lines of the *Songs of Selma* are:

"Star of descending night! fair is thy light in the west! thou liftest thy unshorn head from thy cloud! thy steps are stately on thy hill! What dost thou behold in the plain? The stormy winds are laid. The murmur of the torrent comes from afar. Roaring waves climb the distant rock. The flies of evening are on their feeble wings; the hum of their course is on the field. What dost thou behold, fair light? But thou dost smile and depart. The waves come with joy around thee: they bathe thy lovely hair. Farewell, thou silent beam! let the light of Ossian's soul arise!"

10. Richard Brinsley Sheridan.

Born 1751. — Died 1816.

Sheridan was one of the most brilliant writers of his time; he shone in society, in

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Parliament, and among literary men, and was so full of fun and ready wit that his society was courted everywhere. Lord Byron remarked of Sheridan that he had written the best comedy, the best drama, and the best farce, and that he had delivered the best oration ever heard in England. His two greatest plays are *The School for Scandal* and *The Rivals.* The former shows the mischievous results of gossiping; the latter is one of the most humorous of comedies.

11. Robert Burns.

Born 1759. — Died 1796.

Carlyle says, "The largest soul of all the British lands came among us in the shape of a hard-handed Scottish peasant." This peasant was **Robert Burns.** His father William Burns was a small farmer and nursery-gardener. In the parish of Alloway, two miles from Ayr, he built, with his own hands, the clay cottage to which he brought his bride, and in which his son Robert was born in 1759. Robert was sent to school when he was six years of age, and when the little school at Alloway was broken up, William Burns himself undertook the task of educating his children. He treated the boys as his companions, and talked to them freely about all matters in which he himself was interested. All the family were great readers, and young Burns sat at meals "with a book in one hand and a spoon in the other". As they were very poor the children were set to labour at an early age; when Robert was thirteen

he threshed the corn gathered in, and from the age of fifteen onwards he had to do the work of a full-grown man on the farm. But the years spent in his father's humble cottage were among the happiest of his life, and he has drawn a beautiful picture of the peace and innocence of these early years in his poem *The Cotter's Saturday Night.*

"The cheerfu' supper done, wi' serious face,
 They, round the ingle, form a circle wide;
The sire turns o'er, with patriarchal grace,
 The big Ha'-Bible, ance his father's pride;
He wales a portion with judicious care;
And 'Let us worship God!' he says with solemn air."

"Burns's schoolmaster came afterwards to London," says Carlyle, "and learned what good society was; but declares that in no meeting of men did he ever enjoy better discourse than at the hearth of this peasant."

William Burns died in 1784, and Robert and his brother William took the farm of Mossgiel; and here, during the next few years, the young poet wrote the most famous of his songs and ballads. Most of these poems were composed in the morning while he was at work in the fields, and at night he wrote them down in his little garret. One of them is addressed to a *Mountain Daisy,* a "wee, modest, crimson-tippéd flower," which had struggled into bloom in the bitter-biting north wind, when his ploughshare crushed it into the dust.

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He says,

"E'en thou who mourn'st the Daisy's fate,
That fate is thine — no distant date;
Stern Ruin's ploughshare drives elate
Full on thy bloom,
Till crushed beneath the furrow's weight
Shall be thy doom."

On one occasion his ploughshare broke into the nest which a field mouse had made for herself, and in which she thought to sleep cosily during the winter. He pities the "wee, sleekit, cowerin', timorous beastie," but he adds:

"But, Mousie, thou art no thy lane,
In proving foresight may be vain:
The best laid schemes o' *mice* an *men*
Gang aft a-gley,
An lea'e us nought but grief and pain
For promised joy."

Burns's farm did not prosper, and, like his father, he had to struggle with poverty all his life. In 1786 he resolved to seek his fortune in the West Indies. At that time he fell in love with Mary Campbell, whom he called his "Highland Mary". She is described as a "sweet, sprightly, blue-eyed girl of great modesty and self-respect". Mary consented to become his wife, and on a Sunday in May the lovers met in a sequestered spot on the banks of the Ayr. They stood "on each side of a small purling brook, and, holding a Bible between them, pronounced their vows to be faithful to each other till death should part them." Mary went home, and they hoped soon to meet again;

but this proved to be their final parting, for soon after Mary died of a fever. Several years after her death Burns wrote the poems *To Mary in Heaven* and *Highland Mary*.

In order to obtain money for his passage to Jamaica, Burns published a tiny volume of poems. They were received with great enthusiasm, and Burns soon abandoned the idea of going abroad, and went to Edinburgh to superintend the issue of a second edition. Much to his astonishment he was received at Edinburgh as a sort of hero, and, during the winter, the leaders of society vied with one another in doing him honour. He was not in the least overawed by the rank, or wealth, or learning of his new friends. The sturdy farmer of twenty-seven commanded universal respect by his unaffected manliness; and those who listened to him were struck by the freedom, energy, and originality of his talk. One day, when at the house of one of his friends, he admired a very fine print. Beneath the picture there were some lines, and turning to the company, he asked whose they were. No one seemed to know, but at last a lame boy of fifteen mentioned the name of the author and the poem from which they were taken. Burns, "fixing a look of half-serious interest on the youth," said, "You'll be a man yet, sir." The boy was Walter Scott, and he always remembered this incident with great pleasure. He also remembered Burns's "dignified plainness and simplicity", and his large black eyes, which "literally glowed when he spoke with feeling or interest."

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On the whole, the visit to Edinburgh did Burns rather harm than good; it raised hopes which were not to be fulfilled, and there is a trace of disappointment in many of his letters from this time.

After making a tour through the Highlands Burns took the farm of Ellisland near Dumfries, and settled down to country life with his newly-married wife Jean Armour. The following lines were written soon after his marriage:

"She is a winsome wee thing,
She is a handsome wee thing,
She is a bonnie wee thing,
This sweet wee wife o' mine.

"I never saw a fairer,
I never lo'ed a dearer,
And neist my heart I'll wear her,
For fear my jewel tine.

"O leeze me on my wee thing,
My bonnie, blithesome wee thing;
Sae lang's I ha'e my wee thing,
I'll think my lot divine.

"Tho' warl's care we share o't,
And may see meikle mair o't,
Wi' her I'll blithely bear it,
And ne'er a word repine."

While Burns was still at Ellisland he received an appointment in the excise, and in the discharge of his duties he had to ride no less than 200 miles a week. Finally he gave up his farm, and came to live at Dumfries, giving his whole time to the excise. Unhappily he often gave way to dissipation, and his health began to fail. When the French Revolution broke out he sided passionately with the Revolutionists, and he was at no pains to conceal his sympathies. He was severely reproved by his superiors, and when he defended himself in a spirited, manly letter, the answer he received contained the well-known words, "You are to work, not think." Thus "the proud man's contumely," as well as sickness, debt, and the memory of his excesses cast heavy clouds upon the last scenes of his life; but almost to the end he endeavoured to give musical expression to his thoughts.

During his last illness the sister of one of his friends often went to help Mrs. Burns in her household duties. Burns was grateful for her kindness, and one day asked her to play any tune she especially liked. When she had done so he produced, in a few minutes, a song adapted to her favourite melody — the song which Mendelssohn long afterwards set to music — *Oh, wert thou in the Cauld Blast*. This was one of his last songs. He died in 1796 at the early age of thirty-seven.

The most celebrated of Burns's longer poems are, besides *The Cotter's Saturday Night*, *The Jolly Beggars*, in which he describes the wild and merry life of the gipsies, and *Tam o' Shanter*. The story of *Tam o' Shanter* is one of the many legends he had listened to when he was a child. Tam, a jolly farmer, rides across a dreary moor, and he has to pass the ruined Kirk of Alloway near Ayr. The night is dark as pitch; but when

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he comes to the ruins of the old building, they are lighted up, for the witches are dancing in the kirk. They dart upon him and pursue him, but he escapes.

In *The Vision* Burns relates how the Scottish Muse found the poet by his own fireside, and crowned him with a wreath of holly.

"'And wear thou this,' — she solemn said,
And bound the holly round my head;
The polished leaves and berries red
Did rustling play;
And, like a passing thought, she fled
In light away."

It is chiefly by his songs that the memory of Robert Burns is so dear to his countrymen; they "are known and read and sung wherever Scotchmen and Scotchwomen are to be found — all the world over."

X. The Age of Scott and Byron.

The second half of the eighteenth century, the Age of Cowper and Burns, witnessed the *dawn* of Romantic Poetry; Scott, Byron, Shelley, and their contemporaries completed the work which these poets had begun — the rescue of poetry from formalism, and the return to simplicity and truth. The poetry written at the beginning of the nineteenth century is characterized by vigour and novelty in description and narrative, and by a boldness of imagination unknown since the days of Elizabeth. The poets of this period show a high sense of the beautiful both in nature and in art.

The strong force which, in the days of the French Revolution, was leading men to question and cast off authority, had not lost its energy; and Byron and Shelley especially express, in their poetry, the spirit of revolt against tyranny.

1. Sir Walter Scott.

Born 1771. — Died 1832.

Walter Scott's name is a household word with Englishmen as well as Scotchmen; no author belonging to the first half of the nineteenth century won so much love and admiration. He was born

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at Edinburgh in 1771. Before he was two years old he had an illness which left his right leg lame, but he was otherwise a sturdy child. At the age of five he was sent to his grandfather's farm at Sandyknowe on the Scotch Borders, which was partly built out of the ruins of an old feudal tower. Here he amused himself in reading fairy-stories, old Scotch ballads, histories, and legends of the past, and here he formed his first love for the Tweed and for the past ages of Scotland — the two strongest passions of his life.

In 1778 he was sent to the High School of Edinburgh, and remained there until 1783. He did not distinguish himself in school; but he did distinguish himself in the playground, especially by his wonderful power of story-telling. In 1783 he entered the University, where he studied Latin, Greek, and logic. Of Greek he knew so little that, in later life, he had forgotten the very alphabet. The Greek professor said of him that "dunce he was, and dunce he would remain."

At the age of fifteen Scott was apprenticed to his father, who was a lawyer. One of his father's clients was an old Highland chieftain, and Walter was sent on a visit of business to him, and spent several weeks among the scenes which he was to immortalise in *The Lady of the Lake*, in *Waverley*, and *Rob Roy*.

In 1792 Scott was called to the bar. As a barrister his chief occupation was walking up and down the splendid hall of the old House of Parliament in Edinburgh. But if he got few briefs

he gained a reputation as a poet and story-teller. His first publication, a translation of Bürger's *Lenore* and *Wild Huntsman*, appeared in 1796. In the same year he married the daughter of a French royalist refugee. So hateful were the French at that time in English eyes that she had changed her French name, Charpentier, to Carpenter, to escape ill-will. (rea voinţă)

Soon after Scott was delighted to receive the appointment of Sheriff of Selkirkshire, and in order to be near his work, he rented a house on the Tweed. To live near the Tweed was to be in the centre of the Borderland. He knew and loved its hills and valleys, and he knew every tradition handed down amongst the peasantry. In 1802 he published the first volumes of *The Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, a collection of old songs and ballads, and three years after he completed his first great original poem, *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*. The *Lay* contains the well-known invocation to Caledonia:

"O Caledonia! stern and wild,
Meet nurse for a poetic child!
Land of brown heath and shaggy wood,
Land of the mountain and the flood,
Land of my sires! what mortal hand
Can e'er untie the filial band
That knits me to thy rugged strand!"

Soon after Scott published a long poem entitled *Marmion*, a romantic tale of Flodden Field, and two years later *The Lady of the Lake* appeared.

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The sale of the poems brought in money, and Scott, eager to live in a house of his own, bought a cottage at Abbotsford, which he gradually enlarged till it became a stately mansion. On the bare ground he planted woods; and the flowing Tweed below and the hills sloping up beyond it formed a lovely scene. Scott said to Washington Irving: "To my eyes this wild Border country has beauties peculiar to itself. I like the very nakedness of the land; it has something bold and stern and solitary about it. If I did not see the heather at least once a year *I think I should die!*"

One day Scott was rummaging in an old desk for some fishing-tackle, and he came upon a manuscript which he had laid aside. It was the manuscript of *Waverley*. He now completed it and published it anonymously under the title of *Waverley, or, 'Tis Sixty Years Since*. Its subject is the Rebellion of the Young Pretender in 1745, the last attempt of the Stuarts to regain the throne of England. The success of *Waverley* was immediate and complete. "Who wrote the nameless book?" became the great literary question of the day.

Novel after novel now poured from the press, and the public came to look for two *Waverley Novels* every year. Most of Sir Walter Scott's novels are connected with Scotch and English history. *Ivanhoe* refers to the time of Richard Cœur de Lion, *Kenilworth* to the age of Queen Elizabeth, *Woodstock* to the time of the Civil War, *The Heart of Midlothian* to the days of George II., &c. The most celebrated novel dealing with Continental history is *Quentin Durward*, which refers to the age of Louis XI. of France.

Scott was probably the hardest-working man of the century, and yet no man had more time to give to his friends. At Abbotsford he kept open house and "did the honours for all Scotland." — For a time all went well with him. His works produced a large income, and in 1820 he accepted a baronetcy from George IV., who had just ascended the throne. But troubles were already preparing for him. He had some years before joined the firm of James Ballantyne & Co., the printers of his poems, and in 1826 this house stopped payment. Scott found himself, at the age of fifty-five, not only without property, but loaded with a debt of £ 117,000. He declined all offers of assistance (a London banker is said to have sent him a blank cheque), and set to work to pay off every penny of the debt. The task seemed impossible; but he determined to do the work, and he did it. Every day he wrote what was equal to thirty pages of printing.

This terrible work, pushed on in haste and without rest, told on Scott, and in 1830 he was struck by paralysis. The doctors told him rest was necessary. "As for bidding me not work," answered Scott, "Molly might as well put the kettle on the fire and say, 'Now, don't boil.'" So he went on with his work, and in 1831 his last novel appeared. His delightful *Tales of a Grandfather*, in which the history of Scotland

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is narrated, were among the works of his declining years.

In autumn 1831 Scott went to Italy to seek health. The government of the day placed a frigate at his disposal, and he sailed to Malta and then to Naples. In May 1832 his mind was capable of only one idea — getting home; and he returned to Abbotsford, where he died in September. The story of his death is told very beautifully by his son-in-law and biographer Lockhart: "The end came with the gentleness of sleep. It was a beautiful day, so warm that every window was wide open, and so perfectly still that the sound of all others most delicious to his ear — the gentle ripple of the Tweed over its pebbles — was distinctly audible as we knelt round the bed, and his eldest son kissed and closed his eyes."

Sir Walter Scott was loved or liked by every one who knew him; he was one of the most affectionate and thoughtful of men. He talked to all he met, and lived as friend with friend among his servants and followers. When, at the height of his prosperity, he was the most famous man in Scotland, he never lost his humble, kindly manner; when at the opposite extreme of fortune, his courage never gave way. Wordsworth calls him "the whole world's darling"; and George Eliot says, "This beloved writer has made a chief part in the happiness of many young lives."

"All is great in the Waverley Novels," says Goethe; "material, effect, characters, execution. Scott's novels and poems together give us the

most brilliant and diversified spectacle of human life which we have had since Shakespeare."

2. The Lady of the Lake.

The Lady of the Lake was written to illustrate the life and scenery of the Scotch Highlands. Macaulay says, "The poet's genius has for ever hallowed, not only the country in all its loveliness, but even the barbarous tribes whose manners he invested with all the charms of fiction."

The hero of the poem is King James V. of Scotland, the father of Mary Stuart, popularly called the "King of the Commons", who, traversing the Highlands in disguise, missed his way in the neigbourhood of Loch Katrine. Here he met the Lady of the Lake, Ellen Douglas. Ellen's father was the former favourite of the King, but now, disgraced and banished, he lived with his daughter in a secret retreat on an island of Loch Katrine, the guest of Roderick Dhu, a Highland chieftain. Charmed with Ellen's beauty, James visited the Highlands a second time to woo the Lady of the Lake. He did not know that Roderick Dhu, the chief of Clan Alpine, had rebelled against the King, and had sent the Fiery Cross from place to place to summon his clansmen. James was in great danger of falling into the hands of his enemies, who believed him to be a spy of the royal army. At night he met a lonely mountaineer sitting near a watch-fire. It was Roderick himself. He offered the Saxon, who did not know him, "rest and a guide, and food and fire."

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"And the brave foemen, side by side,
Lay peaceful down like brothers tried,
And slept until the dawning beam
Purpled the mountain and the stream."

Then the Highlander discovered himself to James, whom he thought to be a Saxon knight and follower of the King, and after showing him the way to Stirling, according to his promise, he challenged him to mortal combat. Roderick was severely wounded, and taken to Stirling Castle, where the brave man died soon after.

Lord Douglas and Ellen's lover Malcolm Græme were also imprisoned in Stirling Castle, and the Lady of the Lake, coming to Stirling to entreat the King to set them at liberty, found, to her great surprise, that the unknown knight whom she had met on the borders of Loch Katrine was James himself. The King was reconciled to Lord Douglas and Malcolm, and Ellen was betrothed to her lover. Then, "to her generous impulse true," she implored King James to pardon Roderick; but he replied:

"Forbear thy suit: — the King of Kings
Alone can stay life's parting wings;
I know his heart, I know his hand,
Have shared his cheer, and proved his brand; —
My fairest earldom would I give
To bid Clan-Alpine's Chieftain live!"

3. Ivanhoe.

In *Ivanhoe* Scott paints the life and manners of the English in the twelfth century. The novel refers to a period towards the end of the reign

of Richard Cœur de Lion, when his return from his long captivity had become an event rather wished than hoped for by his subjects. During his absence England had become a scene of violence and depredation; Prince John had been a traitor to his brother, he had vowed to the people that Richard was dead, and tried to seize the crown. The power of the Norman nobility had become exorbitant; every noble had his strong castle, where he reigned the cruel king of all the neighbouring people.

The hero of the novel is Wilfred of Ivanhoe, who called himself the "Disinherited Knight". He was a Saxon, but he had accompanied King Richard to the Holy Land, and had come back to England when the King was a prisoner in Germany. Having been wounded at a tournament, Ivanhoe had fallen into the hands of his enemies, Front-de-Bœuf, a Norman baron, and Sir Brian de Bois-Guilbert, a Templar. Rebecca, a Jewess, who was also a prisoner at Front-de-Bœuf's strong castle of Torquilstone, tended Ivanhoe during his illness. Wilfred was not aware that his father, Cedric the Saxon, as well as the Lady Rowena, a Saxon Princess, whom he had loved for many years, and Athelstane, another descendant of Alfred the Great and the Saxon heir to the English crown, were confined in the same castle. — Ivanhoe had been disinherited by his father because he dared to love the Lady Rowena, while it was Cedric's greatest wish to see her united to Athelstane and crowned Queen of England.

At length the friends and servants of Cedric and Athelstane tried to rescue the prisoners, and the castle was besieged by a strong band of archers headed by the celebrated outlaw Robin Hood and an unknown knight in black armour. This knight was Richard the Lionhearted himself, who had returned from captivity and now hastened to Torquilstone to rescue his friend Ivanhoe.

The gates of the castle were forced open, the battlements scaled, and the prisoners rescued by their friends. During the confusion of the bloody fray Bois-Guilbert carried off the fair Jewess, whom he loved, and detained her at the Preceptory of Templestowe. The Grand Master of the Order arriving from Palestine and finding Rebecca at the Preceptory, believed that she had cast a spell over the Templar. Being told that she practised the art of healing, and had cured many people when every other human aid had proved vain, he was confirmed in his opinion that she was a sorceress, and Bois-Guilbert the victim of magical delusion. She was therefore brought before the tribunal of the Order and condemned to be burnt as a sorceress. Rebecca maintained her innocence and challenged the privilege of trial by combat, hoping to find a champion who would fight for her. Her request being granted, Bois-Guilbert was appointed champion of the Order. — The Templar promised Rebecca to save her, he offered to renounce his Order, to found a new kingdom in the East, and to make her his queen; but she indignantly refused the offers of the haughty knight.

The day appointed for the combat arrived; the Grand Master and many knights repaired to an enclosure called the lists of St. George, and Rebecca was conducted to a black chair placed near a pile of fagots. At length, when "the shadows were cast from the west to the eastward," and the Grand Master was about to declare that Rebecca was to prepare for death, Ivanhoe presented himself in the lists. The combat began, and the moment the spear of Ivanhoe touched the shield of Bois-Guilbert, the Templar reeled in his saddle, lost his stirrups, and fell in the lists. When they unhelmed the conquered champion he was found to be dead. Unscathed by the lance of his enemy, he had died a victim to the violence of his own contending passions. — "This is indeed a judgment of God," said the Grand Master, looking upwards — "Fiat voluntas tua!"

Thus Rebecca was saved, and she left England with her father, hoping to find, amongst the Moslems, the protection that was denied to her in a Christian country.

At the request of King Richard, Cedric consented to the marriage of Ivanhoe and the Lady Rowena, and "they loved each other the more from the recollection of the obstacles which had impeded their union."

4. George Gordon, Lord Byron.

Born 1788. — Died 1824.

George Gordon Byron was born in London in 1788. His father, Captain John Byron of the

Guards, had married a Scotch heiress, not for love, but for her money, and after wasting his wife's fortune, he separated from her. He died when George, their only child, was three years old. Mrs. Byron returned to Scotland with her little son, and lived in retirement at Aberdeen. She was passionately fond of her child, but capricious and violent in temper; and, though the boy loved her, he could not respect her. George was very beautiful in features, but deformed in one of his feet, and all his life through he was painfully sensible of this defect.

The family of the Byrons was a very ancient one, and at that time its head was William, Lord Byron, who, from his wild life, was called "the wicked lord". He died in 1798, and George, his grand-nephew, became Lord Byron and took possession of Newstead Abbey. Two years later he went to Harrow, "a wild northern colt".

While still at Harrow he fell in love with Mary Chaworth, his "bright morning star of Annesley", who seems to have amused herself with his affection. "She liked me as a younger brother," he writes, "and treated and laughed at me as a boy. Had I married Miss Chaworth perhaps the whole tenor of my life would have been different." It was a terrible disappointment to him when she was married to another. In later years, in a foreign land, he wrote with many tears the poem entitled *The Dream*, which is the sad story of his love.

In 1805 Byron went to Cambridge, and two years later he published a volume of poems entitled

Hours of Idleness, which do not show any great merit. A flippant and insulting notice of these poems appeared in the *Edinburgh Review*, and stung the young poet into fury. He answered in the vigorous satire *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*, written in the style of Pope's *Dunciad*. He strikes out wildly against Wordsworth, Coleridge, Southey, Moore, and Scott, and many others of less note. A few years later he was ashamed of "the evil works of his nonage", and did his best to suppress the *Satire*.

In 1809 Byron came of age. He spoke in the House of Lords several times, but soon became tired of "parliamentary mummeries". Soon after he set out on his travels to the East. He sailed to Lisbon, visited some of the battle-fields of Spain, then went on to Malta and Greece, and still further to Smyrna and Constantinople. When in the Dardanelles he swam, like Leander, from Sestos to Abydos, a feat of which he was proud.

When he returned to England he published the first two cantos of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, and the poem became instantly popular. In Byron's own words, "he awoke one morning and found himself famous." Byron was now for a time the idol of London society. The beauty of his features, his charm of manner when he chose to exercise it, his very haughtiness when he did not, acted like a spell. He astonished and delighted the world with a succession of metrical romances, *The Giaour*, *The Bride of Abydos*, *The Corsair*, *Lara*, and *The Siege of Corinth*, all containing passages

of great beauty. These narrative poems were followed by the *Hebrew Melodies*, which are amongst the most beautiful of his shorter poems.

The young poet now made the acquaintance of all the leading men of letters, and became the warm friend of several of them. His intercourse with Scott was especially cordial, though the two were rivals in the field of romance. "I gave over writing romances," says Scott, "because Byron beat me. He hits the mark where I don't even pretend to fledge my arrow." On the other hand Byron never ceased to admire the author of *Waverley*, whom he called the "Ariosto of the North".

In 1815 Byron married an heiress, Miss Milbanke, but the marriage proved a most unfortunate one. A daughter Ada was born in the following year, and soon after his wife separated from him for some cause or causes which have never been explained. Byron felt sorely wounded by the separation. The world, which had so lately worshipped the poet, now turned fiercely against him, and he left England never to return in life. He went first to Brussels, then up the Rhine and through Switzerland, and settled on the shores of the Lake of Geneva, where he wrote the third canto of *Childe Harold*, *Manfred*, a drama, and *The Prisoner of Chillon*.

For the next two years Byron lived at Venice, leading a dissolute life, and writing the fourth canto of *Childe Harold*, and the early cantos of *Don Juan*, his last great work. At Venice he

was joined by Shelley, who modestly said he despaired of rivalling Byron as a poet; and there, too, Thomas Moore, who was destined to write the life of Byron, paid his friend a visit.

When the Greek War of Independence broke out Byron resolved to help the land he loved so well. He had always been an ardent lover of liberty, had grieved over the fall of Napoleon and the return of the Bourbons, and plotted with revolutionists in Italy. He was "the greatest modern preacher of liberty, equality, and fraternity." Now he resolved to cast in his lot with the Greeks, who were striving to throw off the yoke of Turkey. "I shall stick to the cause," he said, "as long as a cause exists." In 1823 he sailed for Greece, and after spending some time in the Ionian Islands, he landed at Missolonghi in January 1824. In April he was seized with illness, and he died without a friend near him, but amidst the universal grief of those whom he came to save.

5. Childe Harold's Pilgrimage.

This poem gives an account of the pilgrimage of a young knight, who, having exhausted all the pleasures of youth, and being sunk in misanthropy, endeavours to solace himself by wandering into foreign countries, and traversing the fairest portions of the world. Scott says, "Childe Harold is Lord Byron's picture, sketched by Lord Byron himself."

We owe the two first cantos of Byron's poem to his tour through Spain, Greece, Turkey, and the East. The poem was written, for the most part,

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amidst the scenes which it attempts to describe. The first canto contains the well-known song *Childe Harold's Good Night.* This is the first stanza:

"Adieu, adieu! my native shore
Fades o'er the waters blue;
The night winds sigh, the breakers roar,
And shrieks the wild sea-mew.
Yon sun, that sets upon the sea,
We follow in his flight:
Farewell awhile to him and thee,
My native Land — Good Night!"

The opening stanzas of the third canto express the bitterness of heart with which Byron left England:

"Is thy face like thy mother's, my fair child?
Ada! sole daughter of my house and heart?
When last I saw thy young blue eyes, they smiled,
And then we parted, — not as now we part,
But with a hope. —
Awaking with a start,
The waters heave around me; and on high
The winds lift up their voices: I depart,
Whither I know not; but the hour's gone by
When Albion's lessening shores could grieve or glad mine eye."

The third canto contains a magnificent picture of the Eve of Waterloo, and a beautiful song of the Rhine:

"The castled crag of Drachenfels
Frowns o'er the wide and winding Rhine,
Whose breast of waters broadly swells
Between the banks which bear the vine."

It also contains the description of Lake Leman with its many beauties and its associations with Rousseau, Voltaire, and Gibbon.

The fourth canto was written in Italy; it contains magnificent pictures of Venice and Rome in their decay, of Santa Croce and the tombs of Petrarch and Tasso, and ends with the well-known *Address to the Ocean.*

Rome.

"O Rome! my country, city of the soul!
The orphans of the heart must turn to thee,
Lone mother of dead empires! and control
In their shut breasts their petty misery.
What are our woes and sufferance? Come and see
The cypress, hear the owl, and plod your way
O'er steps of broken thrones and temples, ye,
Whose agonies are evils of a day —
A world is at our feet as fragile as our clay.

"The Niobe of nations! there she stands,
Childless and crownless, in her voiceless woe;
An empty urn within her withered hands,
Whose holy dust was scattered long ago.
The Scipio's tomb contains no ashes now,
The very sepulchres lie tenantless
Of their heroic dwellers: dost thou flow,
Old Tiber! through a marble wilderness?
Rise, with thy yellow waves, and mantle her distress."

6. Percy Bysshe Shelley.

Born 1792. — Died 1822.

Shelley, even more than Byron, was a child of the revolutionary age and inherited its passionate yearning after "a more glorious day". Like Byron,

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too, he was cut off at an early age, while his genius was still immature.

Shelley was educated at Eton and Oxford, but was expelled with one of his friends because he had composed a tiny pamphlet called *The Necessity of Atheism*. He now spent some restless, uneasy months in London, and at first his father refused him any support, but afterwards he allowed him £ 200 a year. He paid frequent visits to his sisters, who were at school in London, fell in love with Harriet Westbrook, one of their school-fellows, and ran off with her to Scotland, where they were married. Three years later Shelley and Harriet parted by mutual consent, and soon after the poet formed a new connection with Mary Godwin' a highly accomplished woman. The couple settled near Windsor Forest, and there Shelley composed his first great poem, *Alastor, or the Spirit of Solitude*. It is the story of a youthful poet who wanders all over the earth and at last dies alone.

In 1816 Shelley spent some months with Byron on the shores of the Lake of Geneva, and two years after the friends again met at Venice. In 1819 Shelley produced his two great dramas *The Cenci* and *Prometheus Unbound*. During the next few years he lived chiefly at Pisa and Rome. In the preface to *Adonais*, an eloquent lament over the untimely death of Keats, he describes the burial-place of his friend at Rome: "The Protestant churchyard is an open space among the ruins, covered in winter with violets and daisies. It might

make one in love with death to think that one should be buried in so sweet a place."

To this quiet resting-place Shelley's ashes were brought in the next year, 1822. He had come to Pisa to welcome his old friend Leigh Hunt, and was returning in a small coasting vessel, when a terrible thunderstorm came on, and the boat was wrecked in the Gulf of Spezzia. A week later the poet's body was found, and it was burnt on the shore in the presence of Byron and Leigh Hunt.

Macaulay says, "Shelley's poetry seems not to have been an art, but an inspiration." His *Ode to a Skylark* is perhaps the most characteristic of his lyrics.

7. John Keats.

Born 1795. — Died 1821.

John Keats, the poet whose sad fate Shelley mourned for in *Adonais*, was born in 1795. In 1818 he published his first great poem, *Endymion*. It relates the old classical story of the sleeping youth who was kissed by Selene on Mount Latmos. The opening lines are:

"A thing of beauty is a joy for ever:
Its loveliness increases; it will never
Pass into nothingness; but still will keep
A bower quiet for us, and a sleep
Full of sweet dreams, and health, and quiet breathing."

Two years later another volume of poems was published, containing among others *The Eve of St. Agnes* and *Hyperion*. *Hyperion* relates the story

of the deposing of the "elder gods" by Jupiter, Neptune, and Apollo, and Byron said that it "seemed actually inspired by the Titans, and as sublime as Æschylus."

Meanwhile the young poet was dying of consumption. Shelley begged him to come to Italy, and he died at Rome in 1821. Over his grave the line is inscribed which the poet himself directed: "Here lies one whose name was writ in water."

8. Thomas Moore

Born 1779. — Died 1852.

Thomas Moore, the friend and biographer of Byron, was born in Dublin and educated at the University of his native city. At an early age he began to write verses, and when he was twenty-one he published a translation of the *Odes of Anacreon*. Some time after he obtained an office in Bermuda, but he soon returned to Europe, after having made a tour through the United States and Canada. On a journey through Italy he joined Byron at Venice. Then he returned to England, and, for a time, his life in London was one of literary success and social brilliancy; he was called "the spoiled child of popularity". Tom Moore married a young Irish actress and retired into the country, where he meant "to work hard and be as happy as love, literature, and liberty could make him." His last years were clouded by insanity, during which his wife tended him with devoted care. He died in 1852.

Moore's *Irish Melodies* are very popular; they were composed to suit some old national airs already well known to the Irish people; Moore was therefore called "the National Poet of Ireland". His *Sacred Songs* and *National Airs* were also favourably received. In 1817 he wrote the Oriental romance *Lalla Rookh*, which was immensely popular in England, and which we are told delighted the Persians themselves. Moore's *Life of Byron* was published in 1830.

9. Lalla Rookh.

The Oriental romance *Lalla Rookh* consists of a short love tale in prose and four narrative poems: *The Veiled Prophet of Khorassan, The Fire-Worshippers, Paradise and the Peri,* and *The Light of the Harem. — Paradise and the Peri* is the best-known of these poems; it was set to music by Schumann.

Lalla Rookh (tulip-cheek), the daughter of Aurungzebe, Emperor of Delhi, was the most beautiful Princess in the world. She was to be married to Aliris, King of Bucharia, and the nuptials were to be celebrated in the lovely valley of Cashmere, which the Persians call the Unequalled. On her journey to Cashmere she was accompanied by a young minstrel called Feramorz, who recited and sang four romances to her. The poet won the heart of the Princess, and when he left her she felt that her short dream of happiness was over. Her thoughts grew sadder and bitterer every step she advanced; but when she entered

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the hall where she was to meet her future husband, she saw Feramorz standing before her. "Feramorz was, himself, the Sovereign of Bucharia, who, in this disguise, had accompanied his young bride from Delhi, and, having won her love as a humble minstrel, now amply deserved to enjoy it as a King."

One of the four poems which Feramorz recited to Lalla Rookh was *Paradise and the Peri.* In Persian mythology, Peris are elves or fairies that once lived in Eden, but lost heaven with the fallen angels. One of these spirits was standing at the gate of Eden, bewailing her sad fate, when an angel said to her:

"'Tis written in the Book of Fate,
The Peri yet may be forgiven
Who brings to this eternal gate
The gift that is most dear to Heaven!"

The Peri now tried to find this precious gift. On a battle-field in India she found the last drop of blood which a young warrior had shed for the liberty of his country; in the valley of Rosetta she saw a young girl who died with her lover, whom she would not forsake, and the Peri caught the last sigh of this girl, a sigh of pure, self-sacrificing love. But neither of these boons could open the gates of Heaven for her. At length she flew to "Syria's land of Roses", and here she found the most precious gift on earth; it was a tear shed by a repentant sinner. A light from Heaven fell upon that tear, and she knew that now her penance

was accomplished. She flew up to the gates of Eden, singing:

"Joy, joy for ever! — my task is done —
The Gates are passed, and Heaven is won!"

10. William Wordsworth.

Born 1770. — Died 1850.

William Wordsworth was born at Cockermouth in Cumberland and brought up among the beautiful lakes and mountains of the north of England, in the so-called Lake Country. While he was studying at Cambridge the French Revolution began, and the struggle of the French people against the oppression of centuries awakened all his sympathies. In the long vacations in 1790 Wordsworth and a friend of his made a walking tour through Switzerland. They landed at Calais on the eve of the fête held on the 14th of July, 1790, the anniversary of the taking of the Bastille. The two young Englishmen joined in the festivities of the rejoicing nation:

"France standing on the top of golden hours,
And human nature seeming born again."

Wordsworth was again in France when, in September 1792, the terrible massacres occurred which were encouraged by the leaders of the Revolution. He would have joined the Girondists if his friends had not insisted on his returning home. When the Reign of Terror began in France he felt all the misery of disappointed hope, for "the golden vision of a new world" was over.

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At that time Wordsworth's sister Dora went to live with him in a small house among the Somerset hills. She roused him from his despondency and became his devoted companion and friend. Samuel Taylor Coleridge was their neighbour, and the two poets soon became friends. They decided upon writing a volume of poetry together under the name of *Lyrical Ballads*. Coleridge contributed four poems, of which *The Ancient Mariner* was one, Wordsworth contributed eighteen, among which were *The Last of the Flock* and *We are Seven*.

Wordsworth and his sister spent the winter 1798—9 at Goslar. Here the poet wrote several of his most beautiful short lyrics, such as *Ruth* and the four poems on *Lucy*, which seem to be the record of some secret sorrow.

After their return from Germany, the brother and sister went to live in a cottage near Grasmere in the beautiful Lake Country in Northern England. To this cottage Wordsworth brought his bride, and here they lived for many years, carrying out the poet's ideal of "plain living and high thinking"; for they were still poor and lived as simply as the hardy peasants of the dales. This cottage becoming too small, the Wordsworths removed to a larger house at Rydal Mount, where the remainder of the poet's long life was spent. Here a circle of friends gathered round him. The poet Southey lived at Keswick, not very far from Rydal Mount, and for some time Coleridge made his home with Southey. The three friends are sometimes called

the "Lake Poets" or "Lakers", though they had but little in common.

The quiet life of Wordsworth was varied by occasional tours on the Continent, as well as in Scotland, where he visited Sir Walter Scott. Before he died many honours were showered upon him, including an annuity of £ 300, and the office of Poet Laureate. In 1850 the great poet peacefully died and was buried in Grasmere churchyard.

The last really beautiful poem written by Wordsworth belongs to 1818, and describes an *Evening of Extraordinary Splendour and Beauty*. — "Wordsworth's principle is to be in all things natural, natural in thought, natural in language, and to trust for success to the force of simple truth." His longest poem is the *Excursion*; it is tedious as a whole to most readers, though containing many beautiful passages. To find him at his best, we must turn to his shorter pieces, some of which are "simply perfect". Among these are *She was a Phantom of Delight* — *Her Eyes are Wild* — and the sonnets beginning: *Fair Star of evening, splendour of the west* — and *Milton, thou shouldst be living at this hour*. This sonnet contains the lines:

"Thy soul was like a Star and dwelt apart;
Thou hadst a voice whose sound was like the sea,
Pure as the naked heavens, majestic, free."

The sonnet entitled *Thoughts of a Briton on the Subjugation of Switzerland* begins with these lines:

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"Two Voices are there; one is of the sea,
One of the mountains; each a mighty Voice:
In both from age to age thou didst rejoice,
They were thy chosen music, Liberty!"

11. Samuel Taylor Coleridge.

Born 1772. — Died 1834.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge was the son of a vicar in Ottery St. Mary in Devonshire. He was educated at Cambridge. In his first year he gained a gold medal for a Greek poem; but in the following year he got into debt and also into trouble for taking the side of the French revolutionists. Suddenly he disappeared from college, and could nowhere be found.

One day in London the colonel of a regiment of dragoons was inspecting some recruits. Turning to a dreamy-looking lad, he asked, "What's your name, sir?" — "Comberbach," was the answer. — "What do you come here for?" — "Sir, for what most other persons come, to be made a soldier." — "Do you think," said the colonel, "you could run a Frenchman through the body?" — "I do not know," replied the recruit, "as I have never tried; but I'll let a Frenchman run me through the body before I'll run away." — "That will do," replied the colonel, and the recruit was enlisted. About four months afterwards the captain of his company discovered that the new recruit was no other than Coleridge, who had enlisted under a name which he had seen over a baker's shop. So he was discharged and sent back to Cambridge.

Soon after he made the acquaintance of Robert Southey, and the two young men with some others, young and hopeful like themselves, formed a scheme for emigrating to America, and founding a society in which all were to be equal, all were to work, and no one was to be unhappy. All were to be married: the wives were to cook and do the housework; the husbands were to spend their leisure time in reading and writing poetry. Those were grand castles in the air; but they came to nothing, for the only step any of them ever took was to marry. Coleridge and Southey married two sisters, and the wives, like the husbands, had youth and hope, but no money. Coleridge went with his young wife to live at the foot of the Somersetshire hills, and though poor, they seem to have been happy.

Some years after Coleridge went to live with his friend Southey at Keswick; for a time he seems never to have thought it his duty to work for himself or his wife and children, but left all that to Southey. Coleridge was naturally dreamy and lazy; but he had also taken to eating opium, which made him still dreamier and more irregular in his work. For the last nineteen years of his life he was an inmate of the house of his friend Dr. Gillman, a surgeon in London, while his wife and children lived on at Keswick with Southey. Coleridge wrote less and less, but he was a grand talker, and many people came to listen to him just as they had come to hear Dr. Johnson.

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All Coleridge's best poetry was written when he was still a young man living in Somerset. At that time Byron persuaded him to publish the "wild and wondrous tale" of *Christabel;* but the poem, like much that the poet began to do, was never finished. Many of his lyrics are very beautiful, but the most celebrated of his poems is the ballad *The Ancient Mariner.*

12. The Rime of the Ancient Mariner.

The Rime of the Ancient Mariner is a wonderful story. A mariner with a long grey beard and glittering eye stops a wedding-guest and compels him to listen to his tale. He had sailed to the lonely region of ice and death around the South Pole, where not a single living thing was seen; until at last an Albatross crossed the track of the ship. On that utterly desolate sea the bird was hailed at once as the living companion of the sailors; they loved the albatross and fed it every day; but the Ancient Mariner raised his crossbow, and, to gratify a cruel impulse, he shot the harmless bird. He had broken the bond of love. The ship is becalmed, the sailors die of thirst, and he is left all alone. The curse remains upon him, until one moonlight night he sees the water-snakes, "God's creatures of the great calm," which he had despised before; and now: —

"Within the shadow of the ship
I watched their rich attire:
Blue, glossy green, and velvet black,
They coiled and swam; and every track
Was a flash of golden fire.

"O happy living things! no tongue
Their beauty might declare:
A spring of love gushed from my heart,
And I blessed them unaware!
Sure my kind saint took pity on me,
And I blessed them unaware!"

Love had sprung up in his heart, and at that moment he could pray, and angels again ministered to him. He was brought to shore in safety, and now he was compelled "to teach by his own example love for all things that God made:"

"Farewell, farewell! but this I tell
To thee, thou wedding-guest!
He prayeth well who loveth well
Both man and bird and beast.

He prayeth best who loveth best
All things both great and small;
For the dear God, who loveth us,
He made and loveth all."

13. Robert Southey.

Born 1774. — Died 1843.

Southey was the youngest of the so-called Lake Poets. In 1804 he fixed his residence at Greta Hall near Keswick in the heart of the Lake District, where Wordsworth was already settled. He had a government pension, but had to work busily to keep himself, his wife and family, and his wife's sister, Mrs. Coleridge, with her children. In 1813 Southey was made Poet Laureate. He kept on working hard with scarcely any rest or change, till at last his busy brain became clouded and dull.

He used to wander helplessly among his beloved books, talking to them and patting them, but no longer able to read them. For three years he lived this sad life; he died in March 1843.

Southey's longer poems are not much read now; the *Curse of Kehama* with its strange legends from Hindoo mythology, and the Spanish story of *Roderick, the Last of the Goths*, are considered the best of his narrative poems. His *Metrical Tales and Ballads* are better known, they contain, among other poems, *The Inchcape Rock, Lord William*, and the well-known *Battle of Blenheim.*

The *Life of Nelson* is considered Southey's finest prose work. Even Lord Byron, who did not like his poetry, owned that his prose was perfect. Southey says of his hero:

"England has had many heroes, but never one who so entirely possessed the love of his fellow-countrymen as Nelson. All men knew that his heart was as humane as it was fearless; that there was not in his nature the slightest alloy of selfishness or cupidity; but that, with perfect and entire devotion, he served his country with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his strength; and therefore they loved him as truly and as fervently as he loved England."

14. Charles Lamb.

Born 1775. — Died 1834.

Charles Lamb was born in London. He was educated at Christ's Hospital, where Coleridge was his schoolfellow. In his seventeenth year he obtained a clerkship in the East India House, and

he maintained himself and his sister Mary on the small income of the office for many years. A pathetic tragedy is connected with his domestic life: the taint of madness was in the Lamb family — Charles himself had been for a short time confined in an asylum —, and Mary was subject to recurrent fits of lunacy, and in one of these mysterious visitations she stabbed her mother to death, before any one in the room could interfere. Lamb's devotion to his unfortunate sister was most beautiful. In her lucid intervals she resembled him in gentle, genial humour and shrewd intelligence, and with her he wrote a series of *Tales from Shakespeare*, which is still a popular book with the young. In a letter to one of his friends Lamb says, "Mary is doing for a bookseller twenty of Shakespeare's plays, to be made into children's tales. She has already done *The Tempest, The Winter's Tale, A Midsummer Night's Dream, The Merchant of Venice*, and *Cymbeline;* I have done *Othello* and *Macbeth*, and mean to do all the tragedies.

In 1823 Lamb published his *Essays of Elia*, in which he renewed the lost grace of the essay, and, with a humour not less gentle, but more subtle than Addison's, invested the common things of everyday life and the familiar sights of London with an indescribable charm.

15. Thomas De Quincey.

Born 1785. — Died 1859.

Thomas De Quincey ranks with Addison and Macaulay as one of the greatest masters of

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English composition. He was born at Manchester, and lost his father in his boyhood. His mother sent him to a grammar school, but he ran away and went to Wales, where he reaped the fruits of his own folly. His friends did not ask him to return, but sent him a guinea a week while he remained in Wales. Wearied at length of his country life, he found his way to London, and here he was discovered by his friends in a state of extreme wretchedness. After he had been at home for some time, he was sent to Oxford. Here he suffered from a painful disease, and was induced to try opium as a remedy. The result was that he took to opium-eating as a regular habit, and was a slave to it for eighteen years. He managed to cure himself at last, but not till he had suffered the most frightful agony of mind and body. On leaving Oxford he resided at Grasmere, in Cumberland, where he enjoyed the society of the Lake Poets. In 1843 he removed with his family to Scotland, and settled at Lasswade, in the neighbourhood of Edinburgh. He died in 1859.

De Quincey's writings may be divided into three kinds — interesting and amusing sketches, thoughtful essays, and prose poems. The works by which he is best known are the *Confessions of an English Opium Eater, The English Mail-Coach, Joan of Arc,* and *Suspiria de Profundis.* The *Confessions* are the strange but fascinating story of his early life, while the *Suspiria* are an imaginative work of the prose-poem kind.

From "Joan of Arc".

"Great was the throne of France even in those days, and great was he that sat upon it; but well Joanna knew that not the throne, nor he that sat upon it, was for *her;* but, on the contrary, that she was for *them;* not she by them, but they by her, should rise from the dust. Gorgeous were the lilies of France, and for centuries had the privilege to spread their beauty over land and sea, until, in another century, the wrath of God and man combined to wither them. But well Joanna knew, early at Domremy she had read that bitter truth, that the lilies of France would decorate no garland for *her.* Flower nor bud, bell nor blossom would ever bloom for *her.*"

16. Other Authors of this Period.

Thomas Campbell (b. 1777. — d. 1844) was born in Glasgow. His chief poem, *The Pleasures of Hope,* at once became a favourite with the public. Campbell was in Germany in December 1800, when the battle of Hohenlinden was fought, and his poem on this subject, which Byron declared to be "perfectly magnificent", is perhaps the best of all his works. While in Germany he also wrote *The Soldier's Dream* and *Ye Mariners of England.*

Campbell died in 1844. At his funeral, in Westminster Abbey, a Polish noble scattered upon his coffin a handful of earth from the grave of Kosciusko, whose praises are sung in the *Pleasures of Hope.*

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The first stanza of *Ye Mariners of England* is:

"Ye mariners of England,
That guard our native seas!
Whose flag has braved a thousand years
The battle and the breeze!
Your glorious standard launch again
To match another foe!
And sweep through the deep,
While the stormy tempests blow;
While the battle rages loud and long,
And the stormy tempests blow."

James Henry Leigh Hunt (b. 1784, d. 1859) established, with his brother, a weekly paper called *The Examiner*, in which he made a sharp attack upon the Prince Regent; and for this libel the brothers were sentenced to two years' imprisonment in separate jails. While in prison, Leigh Hunt wrote the *Story of Rimini*, a graceful Italian story in verse, and two other volumes of poems. His *Autobiography* contains pleasant accounts of his intercourse with Byron and Shelley, with Keats and Wordsworth, and, in later times, with Carlyle.

Felicia Hemans (b. 1793. — d. 1835) has published many books, both in prose and verse, and for a time her poetry was very popular, though Scott says that "it has too many flowers for the fruit." At present she is best known by single poems, such as *The Child's First Grief*, *The Homes of England*, *The Graves of a Household*, *Casabianca*, and *The Landing of the Pilgrim Fathers*.

Thomas Hood (b. 1799. — d. 1845) has been called the great modern Poet of Humanity. He was a literary man by profession, and at the early age of twenty-two he became subeditor of the *London Magazine*. He published several volumes of serious and humorous poems, one of these collections being entitled *Whims and Oddities*. The Christmas number of *Punch* for 1843 contained Hood's pathetic lyric *The Song of the Shirt*, which thrilled the heart of England.

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XI. The Age of Tennyson.

The Age of Tennyson, or the Victorian Era, is remarkable for great activity in all departments of literature. It cannot boast of so many illustrious poets as the first half of the nineteenth century, but in prose literature no former period has been so productive as the age in which we live. The leading features of this period are the extraordinary growth of prose fiction, the development of historical writing, and the great increase of periodical literature.

Fiction is the department of literature in which the Victorian Age stands pre-eminent. Scott's novels, which belong to the first half of this century, are indeed almost unrivalled as historical romances; but no better specimens of the novel of modern life can be found than the works of the great writers of the Victorian Era, especially Dickens, Thackeray, and George Eliot.

A great impetus was given to historical literature by Macaulay, who first showed that the record of facts may be made as fascinating as fiction. In the pictorial style of writing history he was followed by Froude and the American historians Motley and Prescott.

Another remarkable feature of this time is the growth of periodical literature. The magazines and reviews are very numerous, and the newspaper press has produced a literature peculiar to itself.

1. Alfred, Lord Tennyson.

Born 1809. — Died 1892.

Alfred Tennyson was descended from the Plantagenets through the Norman family of d'Eyncourt. He was born in 1809, in the rectory of Somersby, a village buried among the Lincolnshire Wolds. Alfred was the youngest of three brothers, and they all loved poetry and began early to write poems; Alfred's first verses were written on a slate when he was quite a child. His favourite poet was Byron, and when the news of the great poet's death came to England the boy thought "the whole world was at an end," and he wandered out disconsolately and carved "Byron is dead" upon the sand-hills.

Like his brothers he was educated at Cambridge, and, after his father's death, he returned to Somersby to live with his mother and sisters, and to write poems, instead of seeking promotion in ordinary ways. The earliest collection of Tennyson's poems was published in 1830; the second volume includes such well-known favourites as *The May Queen* and *Locksley Hall*; but at first these poems were not very successful.

In 1847 *The Princess* appeared, and three years after, on the death of Wordsworth, Tennyson was

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appointed Poet Laureate. It was in 1850, also, that he married Miss Emily Sellwood and took up his residence at Twickenham. In the same year *In Memoriam*, a collection of poems written in memory of Tennyson's dearest friend, Arthur Hallam, who died at Vienna, was published. In one of these lyrics the poet welcomes the New Year in a hopeful spirit, trying to "forget the things that are behind":—

"Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky,
The flying cloud, the frosty light:
The year is dying in the night;
Ring out, wild bells, and let him die.

"Ring out the old, ring in the new,
Ring, happy bells, across the snow:
The year is going, let him go;
Ring out the false, ring in the true.

* * *

"Ring in the valiant man and free,
The larger heart, the kindlier hand;
Ring out the darkness of the land,
Ring in the Christ that is to be."

In 1859 the *Idylls of the King* appeared — the longest and perhaps the finest of Tennyson's works. In this book he selected some of the most interesting of the old legends of King Arthur and his Round Table, and "set them to the music of his own noble language." The four first Idylls are: *Geraint and Enid*, in which he pictures for us Enid riding in her faded silk before her cruel lord, — *Lancelot and Elaine*, the story of the sweet and faithful Elaine gazing tenderly on the shield of her absent

knight, the guilty Sir Lancelot, — *Merlin and Vivien*, the story of the beautiful but treacherous Vivien weaving her spells around the old wizard Merlin, — and *Guinevere*, the story of Arthur's faithless Queen, whom we see lying in an agony of remorse at the feet of Arthur.

Enoch Arden was published in 1864. It is the story of a shipwrecked sailor who, coming home after ten years' absence, finds his wife married to another man, and nobly resolves never to tell her, never to let her know that he was not drowned like his companions.

Tennyson also wrote several dramas, such as *Harold* and *Queen Mary*, but they are not equal in merit to his lyric and narrative poems. His last play, published in 1892, is *The Foresters*. The hero is Robin Hood, and the poet introduces Richard the Lionhearted and King John among the "Merry Men of Sherwood".

Of the poet's life there is little or nothing to record; in fact "Tennyson's work was his life." He spent his last years at Farringford, his country-seat in the Isle of Wight. In 1884 he was raised to the peerage with the title of Baron Tennyson d'Eyncourt, as a reward for his literary merit. In his eighty-first year, on a passage across the Solent from Aldworth in Hampshire to Farringford, he composed the poem *Crossing the Bar:*

"Sunset and evening star,
And one clear call for me!
And may there be no moaning of the bar
When I put out to sea,

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"But such a tide as moving seems to sleep,
Too full for sound and foam,
When that which drew from out the boundless deep
Turns again home.

"Twilight and evening bell,
And after that the dark!
And may there be no sadness of farewell,
When I embark;

"For though from out our bourne of Time and Place
The flood may bear me far,
I hope to see my Pilot face to face
When I have crossed the bar."

Tennyson's poem *The Silent Voices* was set to music by Lady Tennyson. His last poem was written on the death of Albert Victor, Duke of Clarence, the eldest grandson of Queen Victoria, who died in 1892.

The "one clear call" also came to the poet in 1892. He died at Aldworth on the 6th of October. At his funeral in Westminster Abbey the beautiful Burial Service of the Church of England was enriched by the chanting of his own poems *Crossing the Bar* and *The Silent Voices*.

2. The Princess.

The Princess is a graceful mock-heroic poem in blank verse. Ida, the beautiful daughter of the King of the South, was betrothed to the Prince of the North, whom she had never seen. She refused to carry out the agreement made by her parents, and founded a university for women,

"With prudes for proctors, dowagers for deans,
And sweet girl-graduates in their golden hair."

The Prince, who had seen Ida's picture, loved her, and resolved to win her heart and her hand. When he saw the swallows flying south, he gave them a loving message for Ida:

"O Swallow, Swallow, flying, flying South,
Fly to her, and fall upon her gilded eaves,
And tell her, tell her, what I tell to thee.

"O tell her, Swallow, thou that knowest each,
That bright and fierce and fickle is the South,
And dark and true and tender is the North.

"O Swallow, flying from the golden woods,
Fly to her, and pipe and woo her, and make her mine,
And tell her, tell her, that I follow thee."

Soon after the Prince and his two friends Cyril and Florian went to Ida's college disguised as girls, and they were admitted. They were not discovered until one day Cyril, at a picnic, began to sing a foolish drinking-song, thus betraying their secret. Ida, in great anger, turning to leave him, slipped and fell into the river. The Prince plunged in and saved her, and then attempted to flee; but he was seized by the college proctors, and brought before the haughty lady. The Princess dismissed him, quivering with rage at the way in which she had been deceived. Soon after the Prince was wounded in an engagement between the army of the King of the South and that of his father. When Ida saw him lie bleeding on the sand, her heart melted, and she nursed him

very tenderly, and pity brought with it love, and love as conqueror.

3. Robert Browning.

Born 1812. — Died 1889.

Robert Browning was born in London. His first important work was *Paracelsus*, a kind of drama, which was written on his return from Italy, where he had spent two years. The poem describes the strivings of a soul after hidden knowledge and power. Browning's next poem was *Sordello*, which is again the history of a soul. It is the most difficult to understand of all his works, and amusing stories are told of the bewilderment of readers. Tennyson said, "There were only two lines in it that I understood, and they were both lies; they were the opening and closing lines,

'Who wills may hear Sordello's story told.' —
'Who would have heard Sordello's story told.'"

Carlyle also bears witness, "My wife has read through *Sordello* without being able to make out whether Sordello was a man, or a city, or a book."

Next came *Pippa Passes*, a fantastic poem in dramatic form, which at once gained public favour. Pippa is a factory girl who passes the chief persons in the drama at critical moments, and thus exercises an influence on their fates of which she is not aware. *Pippa Passes* is the first of a series of eight little volumes of poetry entitled *Bells and Pomegranates*.

In 1846 Browning married Elizabeth Barrett, who was herself a writer of fine genius, and they made Italy their home, and remained there till Mrs. Browning's death in 1861. After burying his wife at Florence, "the white-rose garland at her feet, the crown of laurel at her head," he brought his only son to London and settled in a little house close to his wife's sister, that the child might have the benefit of her care.

After Mrs. Browning's death, the poet's chief work was *The Ring and the Book*. In Florence he found, on a book-stall, a little volume 200 years old, which contained the story of the trial of a Roman count for the murder of his wife and her foster-parents. The Book is this little volume, the Ring is the circle of narrative and character-drawing with which the poet surrounds it. In the poem the story is told in ten soliloquies by the leading actors of the drama. The most touching canto is the one entitled *Pompilia*, in which the child-wife of Count Guido tells her story, while her life is flickering to an end.

One of Browning's best-known ballads is *The Pied Piper of Hamelin*. It tells the story of the piper who charmed the rats away from the town of Hamelin, and then led the children to a cavern in a mountain side, where they disappeared.

Robert Browning died in 1889, a day or two after the publication of *Asolando*, a volume of poems.

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Home Thoughts from the Sea.

"Nobly, nobly Cape St. Vincent to the north-west died away;
Sunset ran, one glorious blood-red, reeking into Cadiz Bay;
Bluish 'mid the burning water, full in face Trafalgar lay;
In the dimmest north-east distance dawned Gibraltar grand and grey;
'Here and here did England help me: how can I help England?' — say
Whoso turns as I, this evening, turn to God to praise and pray,
While Jove's planet rises yonder, silent over Africa."

4. Elizabeth Barrett Browning.

Born 1806. — Died 1861.

Elizabeth Barrett was the daughter of a wealthy Jamaica planter; she was born in Herefordshire, where her father had a country house. When she was twenty-eight she fell ill, and had to spend several years at Torquay. In the summer of 1839, when she had partly recovered her strength, her favourite brother and two friends were drowned in sight of her window, their boat upsetting as they were crossing the bar at Torquay. This tragedy nearly killed her. She now lived confined for six years in a darkened room in her father's London house. At length she recovered, and in 1846 she married the poet Robert Browning. The rest of her life was spent in Italy.

Mrs. Browning's longest poem is *Aurora Leigh*, a novel in verse, in which she expresses her

opinions on the main social questions of the time. She has also written many sonnets and other short lyrics, which are more popular than her narrative poems. *The Cry of the Children* is one of the most powerful of her poems. It is a plea for the young children employed in factories and coal-mines from their earliest years. As in the case of Hood's *Song of the Shirt* it was the means of calling public attention to the sufferings of these children.

5. Matthew Arnold.

Born 1822. — Died 1888.

Matthew Arnold was the eldest son of the celebrated Dr. Arnold of Rugby. In his twenty-ninth year he was appointed an Inspector of Schools. Soon after he published *Empedocles on Etna*, a collection of poems, which contains the dramatic poem *Tristram and Iseult*. In 1857 he was appointed to the Chair of Poetry at Oxford.

Arnold is a reflective rather than a passionate poet, classical rather than romantic.

The highest place among Arnold's prose works must be given to the *Essays in Criticism*, which raised the author to the first rank of critics. "The business of criticism," he says, "is neither to find fault, nor to display the critic's own learning or influence; it is to know *the best which has been thought and said in the world*, and, by using this knowledge, to create a current of fresh and free thought."

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Too Late.

From "Empedocles on Etna".

"Each on his own strict line we move,
And some find death ere they find love;
So far apart their lives are thrown
From the twin soul which halves their own."

6. Dante Gabriel Rossetti.

Born 1828. — Died 1882.

Dante Gabriel Rossetti was an Italian; but he was born in London, where his father was Professor of Italian Literature at King's College. Rossetti was a painter and poet of the Pre-Raphaelite school. To *The Germ,* the organ of the Pre-Raphaelites, he contributed the ballad *The Blessed Damozel,* and one of his loveliest pictures represents the "Damozel", the lilies lying languidly across her arm. There can be no question that Rossetti's poems are beautiful. They are full of pictures, gorgeous in colour, and marvellously wrought. In his poetry something of the unearthly spirit of the poet of *The Ancient Mariner,* something of the magic of Keats's *La Belle Dame sans Merci* survives.

The House of Life, a series of exquisite sonnets, appeared in 1881.

The Last Three from Trafalgar.

From "The House of Life".

"In grappled ships around the *Victory*
Three boys did England's duty with stout cheer,
While one dread truth was kept from every ear,
More dire than deafening fire that churned the sea:

For in the flag-ship's weltering cockpit he
Who was the Battle's Heart without a peer,
He who had seen all fearful sights save fear,
Was passing from all life save victory.
"And round the old memorial board to-day,
Three greybeards — each a war-worn British tar —
View through the mist of years that hour afar:
Who soon shall greet, 'mid memories of fierce fray,
The impassioned soul which on its radiant way
Soared through the fiery cloud of Trafalgar."

7. Christina Georgina Rossetti.

Born 1830. — Died 1894.

Christina Georgina Rossetti was the sister of Dante Gabriel Rossetti. She was also born in London, where she lived all her life. In early girlhood she began to write poetry, and some of her verses appeared in *The Germ* in 1850. Her two volumes *Goblin Market* and *The Prince's Progress* contain her most beautiful poems, which are characterized by imaginative power, exquisite expression, simplicity, and depth of thought.

Faith, Hope, and Love.

"Hope is like a harebell, trembling from its birth;
Love is like a rose, the joy of all the earth.
Faith is like a lily, lifted high and white;
Love is like a lovely rose, the world's delight.
Harebells and sweet lilies show a thornless growth,
But the rose with all its thorns excels them both."

8. William Morris.

Born 1834. — Died 1896.

William Morris is the author of many narrative poems, mostly in the manner and metre

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of Chaucer. *The Earthly Paradise* is a cycle of twenty-four beautiful Greek and mediæval stories in verse. *The Story of Sigurd*, an Icelandic saga, has been called the one great epic of the nineteenth century. More perhaps than any other English poet, Morris gives expression to that emotion which Tennyson called "the passion of the past".

9. The Earthly Paradise.

The Earthly Paradise is a collection of stories in verse. In an island, far west in the Atlantic, a colony of Greeks had settled, and their descendants retained their language, traditions, and religion. A band of wanderers, grey-haired, travel-stained, and dejected, appear unexpectedly in the market-place of the Greeks, who give them a kindly welcome. In answer to the questions of the islanders, Rolf the Norwegian tells how he and his company have spent the best years of their lives in a fruitless search for an *earthly paradise* — a fair land of sunshine and unfading flowers, where, they fondly believed, sorrow and death were alike unknown.

They had sailed from Norway in the ship *The Fighting Man*, and made for Bremen, where they bought great stores of food and armour, and also a second boat, by name *The Rose-Garland.*

Reaching the open sea, they sailed due west for many a weary day, and after encountering fierce storms, in which they almost perished, and many strange adventures, they came to a country where some of the wanderers, seeing the folly of their

quest, decided to spend the remainder of their days. Others set sail in the *Fighting Man* to regain, if possible, their native land of Norway; while, with heavy hearts, Rolf and some forty men embarked in the *Rose-Garland*, and went on their way southward. For three years they struggled on, sometimes driven far out to sea by storms, sometimes resting on shore, till at last they came to the island inhabited by the Greeks.

Such was the story told by Rolf in the market-place of the Greeks, whose language he spoke with ease, as his boyhood had been spent in Byzantium. By this time the wanderers had ceased to cherish the vain hope of an earthly paradise; their one remaining wish was to gain a resting-place where they might spend the evening of their lives in peace. Therefore, when the elders of the city pressed them to settle in their midst they gladly did so, finding there as much of a paradise as is granted to men on earth.

On a March day, when a banquet was held in honour of the opening year, the high priest of the land arose and proposed that, at a feast to be given twice each month throughout the new year, one of their number should entertain the others with the recital of a story. His proposal being eagerly agreed to, the priest himself related the tale of *Atalanta's Race*, and, two weeks later, one of the Norsemen told the old French romance of *The Man Born to be King.*

In this way the twenty-four stories of *The Earthly Paradise* are linked together, one being

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told by a Greek, and one by a Norseman alternately. Morris enriches the old-world legends with many a beautiful and original fancy of his own; he calls them

"The gentle music of the by-gone years,
Long past to us with all their hopes and fears."

10. Alfred Austin.

Born 1835.

Alfred Austin now fills the post occupied by Southey, Wordsworth, and Tennyson, for he was appointed Poet Laureate in 1896. *Madonna's Child*, *English Lyrics*, and *Prince Lucifer* are some of his best-known volumes of verse. One of his most delightful prose books is *The Garden that I Love*, a charming description of his own residence at Swinford Old Manor in Kent.

The *Times* relates the fact that, many years ago, when Alfred Austin was at Delphi, a Greek priest tore from a tree in full flower (the month was May) a branch of bay and gave it to him. When Lord Tennyson died Austin sent this branch to Aldworth as his tribute, and it was placed in the coffin with Lady Tennyson's roses and a volume of Shakespeare.

11. Algernon Charles Swinburne.

Born 1837. — Died 1909.

Algernon Charles Swinburne was the greatest English poet of the beginning of the twentieth century. He wrote some exquisite dramas, such as *Atalanta in Calydon*, *Erechtheus*,

Bothwell, and *Mary Stuart;* but it is as a writer of lyrics that he is greatest. His lyrical poems were collected under the titles of *Poems and Ballads*, *Songs before Sunrise*, *Songs of Two Nations*, &c. He has been called "the greatest poet of the sea", for no writer has described the sea in all its changing colour and sound, its light and its movement, more beautifully than Swinburne. Lovers of poetry are delighted with the indescribable magic of Swinburne's strange melodies.

Swinburne gave his ardent sympathy to the cause of European freedom, and his aspirations culminate in the *Songs before Sunrise*. The "sunrise" is the beginning of an era of liberty and justice; Swinburne's cry is for "liberty for all nations in all parts of the world."

Had I Wist.

"Had I wist, quoth spring to the swallow,
That earth could forget me, kissed
By summer, and lured to follow
Down ways that I know not, I,
My heart should have waxed not high:
Mid-March would have seen me die,
Had I wist.

"Had I wist, Oh spring, said the swallow,
That hope was a sunlit mist,
And the faint, light heart of it hollow,
Thy woods had not heard me sing,
Thy winds had not known my wing;
It had faltered ere thine did, spring,
Had I wist."

12. Charles Dickens.

Born 1812. — Died 1870.

Charles Dickens was born at Landport, a suburb of Portsmouth, and his father was a clerk in Portsmouth Dockyard. When Charles was four years old the family removed to Chatham, and the five years they spent here were the happiest in Dickens's boyhood. Among the green lanes and woods of Kent he learned to love the country, a love which he retained through life. The small library of his father contained such books as *Robinson Crusoe*, *The Vicar of Wakefield*, and *Roderick Random*, all of which he read many times over and imitated in little nursery stories of his own.

On the settlement of the family in London in 1821 Dickens's early trials began. His father had always been troubled with money difficulties, and now he became an inmate of the Marshalsea Prison, and the family suffered terrible hardships. When Charles was ten years old — his father still in prison and his mother's furniture being gradually sold to support the family — Charles was placed in a blacking warehouse in the City, where he had to paste labels on blacking-bottles. This misery lasted nearly two years. He never forgot the agony he endured in that place, and many years later he writes: "Even now, famous and caressed and happy, I often forget in my dreams that I have a dear wife and children; even that I am a man; and wander desolately back to that time of my life."

But brighter days were coming. His father was released from prison, and became a newspaper reporter, and Charles was sent to "a classical and commercial academy", where he did not add very largely to his stock of knowledge. At the age of fifteen he became an attorney's clerk, and a little later a reporter in the gallery of the House of Commons, having made himself master of shorthand. His first essay in fiction was the amusing sketch of *Mr. Minns and his Cousin*, which was published in *The Old Monthly Magazine*. He himself has described how, one evening at twilight, he stealthily and with fear and trembling dropped the paper into a dark letter-box in a dark office up a dark court in Fleet Street, and with what agitation he bought and opened the next number of the magazine, and actually saw himself in print. "On which occasion," he adds, "I walked down to Westminster Hall, and turned into it for half an hour, because my eyes were so dimmed with joy and pride that they could not bear the street, and were not fit to be seen there."

This paper was the first of the delightful *Sketches by Boz*, which were afterwards collected in two volumes.

In 1836 the immortal *Pickwick* began to appear. Old and young, high and low, were delighted with its overflowing fun and its droll characters, and it is still perhaps the most widely read of all Dickens's books. Every one followed with the deepest interest and amusement the fortunes of

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Mr. Pickwick, a kindly old bachelor, who is represented as the founder of a club called after his own name. With three friends, the "Corresponding Members of the Pickwick Club", and his servant Sam Weller, a compound of cool impudence and rich humour with the tenderest fidelity, he travels over England, meeting with many laughable adventures. "Sam Weller," says a well-known critic, "is as wonderful a creation as Shakespeare's Falstaff."

Pickwick was followed in quick succession by *Oliver Twist*, *Nicholas Nickleby*, and *The Old Curiosity Shop*. — *Oliver Twist* is the story of an orphan boy who remains pure and good among thieves and burglars. In *Nicholas Nickleby* the horrors of some cheap schools in Yorkshire are exhibited. The heroine of *The Old Curiosity Shop* is "Little Nell", a sweet, pure-minded child who takes care of her helpless grandfather. In his pictures of children in their joys and sorrows Dickens is always beautiful and true, and it is this which gives so great a charm to *Oliver Twist* and *The Old Curiosity Shop*.

A visit to America in 1842 supplied materials for the novel *Martin Chuzzlewit*, in which he dealt very severely with certain features of Transatlantic life and character, and which was therefore very unpopular in America.

In 1844 Dickens went to Italy, and the next few years he spent chiefly in Genoa, Lausanne, and Paris. Before starting he wrote the first of his Christmas books, the *Christmas Carol*. — "Who

can listen," said Thackeray, "to objections regarding such a book as this? It seems to me a national benefit, and, to every man or woman who reads it, a personal kindness." The *Christmas Carol* was followed by *The Cricket on the Hearth* and *The Chimes*.

Dickens's next great work was *Dombey and Son*, a novel which illustrates the life of a City merchant, "who is as proud of his name as if he had inherited it from a race of princes." He neglects and slights his daughter Florence, but loves his little son Paul, because the latter will add a sort of completeness to the firm and make it truly "Dombey and Son". Little Paul dies, and Mr. Dombey fails in business, and thus his pride is humbled, and he is reconciled to Florence. The picture of Paul Dombey is as beautiful as that of "Little Nell".

In 1849 *David Copperfield* appeared, and soon after *Hard Times*, the story of a strike, was written. *Little Dorrit*, the next novel, depicts the touching devotion of a young girl to her selfish father, who is a prisoner for debt in the Marshalsea. *The Tale of Two Cities* is a picture of the stormy times of the French Revolution, the two cities being Paris and London.

Dickens was the editor of a weekly paper called at first *Household Words* and afterwards *All the Year Round*, to which he contributed *A Child's History of England*.

In 1856 Dickens bought the house of Gadshill near Rochester, which he had often admired as

a child thirty-five years before. Here he spent the closing years of his life very happily and busily, and here he died suddenly, while sitting at his desk, on June 9, 1870. He was buried in Westminster Abbey.

13. David Copperfield.

In the preface to *David Copperfield* Dickens says, "It will be easily believed that I am a fond parent to every child of my fancy; but, like many fond parents, I have in my heart of hearts a favourite child. And his name is David Copperfield."

In this novel, which is written in the form of an autobiography, Dickens has portrayed the hardships and miseries of his own boyhood. Little David was born after the death of his father; he was brought up by his young mother and her faithful old servant Pegotty. On his return from a long visit he had paid to Pegotty's brother and her sweet little niece Em'ly, David found his mother married to a Mr. Murdstone. This gentleman treated the delicate, sensitive boy so harshly and beat him so mercilessly that he became sullen and dogged, and finally rebelled against his stepfather. He was now sent to school in London, and after his mother's death he was forced to work at the warehouse of Murdstone and Grinby with three or four other boys of his age, who were ignorant and vulgar. His work was to rinse and wash empty bottles and to paste labels on full ones. "No words can express the secret agony of my soul as I sank into this companionship. The deep remembrance

of the sense I had of being utterly without hope now, and of the shame I felt in my position, cannot be written."

The child became the lodger of Mr. Micawber, who was always waiting for "something to turn up," and who, after struggling in vain with money difficulties, was carried away to prison, telling the broken-hearted boy "that the sun was set upon him for ever." "Mr. Micawber" is no other than Dickens's own father.

At length David resolved to run away and to go down into the country to the only relation he had in the world in order to tell her his story. Being robbed at first setting out he walked all the way to Dover, where his aunt, Miss Betsey Trotwood, a very grim-looking elderly lady, who had been the "principal magnate" of the family, received him more kindly than he had expected. She sent him to school at Canterbury, and here he made the acquaintance of Agnes Wickfield, the daughter of a lawyer, who became his good angel, and whom he loved as a sister.

Some years after he was articled to a London attorney, and fell in love with his pretty daughter Dora. Miss Trotwood losing the greater part of her fortune David had to give up his plan of becoming a lawyer, and he turned parliamentary reporter. Then he began to write for the newspapers, and henceforth literature was his profession. His early struggles were great indeed, all the more so as he married Dora Spenlow, who was very ignorant and childish and as poor as himself, and

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knew nothing about housekeeping. David resolved to "form his child-wife's mind", but he found that he only made her uncomfortable and miserable; so he tried to adapt himself to little Dora, and to make her life all sunshine. After two years "Little Blossom", as Aunt Betsey used to call her, "withered in its bloom upon the tree."

Meanwhile Agnes Wickfield had been tormented and persecuted by Uriah Heep, a wretch who pretended to be "so very 'umble". He had been her father's clerk, and was now a partner in his business, after having deluded and defrauded Mr. Wickfield for many years. Uriah tried to induce Agnes to become his wife in order to save her father from ruin and shame, hoping that she would sacrifice herself to a mistaken sense of duty. But Mr. Micawber, who was now Mr. Wickfield's clerk, exposed Uriah Heep as a cheat and a forger, forcing him to make restoration of all his rapacity had become possessed of.

After his wife's death David Copperfield went to the Continent and spent several years in Switzerland. On his return he married Agnes Wickfield.

14. William Makepeace Thackeray.

Born 1811. — Died 1863.

Thackeray divided with Dickens the honour of being called "the first novelist of the day". He was born in Calcutta, where his father was in the Civil Service of the East India Company. When he was five years old he was sent home to be educated in England, and in one of his lectures he recalls this time:

"I came from India as a child, and our ship touched at an island on the way home, where my black servant took me a walk over rocks and hills till we passed a garden, where we saw a man walking. 'That is he,' said the black; 'that is Bonaparte; he eats three sheep every day and all the children he can lay his hands on.' There were people in the British dominions, besides that poor black, who had an equal terror and horror of the Corsican ogre."

Thackeray was sent to the famous Charterhouse School, the school of Steele and Addison, and from there he went to Cambridge, where he remained only one year. Then he spent some time on the Continent, at Weimar, where he saw Goethe, and at Paris, where he studied as an artist. Like Goethe he always retained his love for art, though he never himself became a master. "I can remember," he says, "when Mr. Dickens was a very young man and had commenced delighting the world with some charming humorous works, that this young man wanted an artist to illustrate his writings; and I recollect going to his chambers with two or three drawings in my hand, which, strange to say, he did not find suitable."

On his return to England, Thackeray became a writer for the newspapers and magazines. His first novel *Vanity Fair* began to come out in monthly numbers in 1846. We are told that, after he began to write the novel, he could not think of a suitable name, till at last it flashed upon him as an inspiration in the middle of the night.

"I jumped out of bed," he says, "and ran three times round my room, uttering as I went, 'Vanity Fair, Vanity Fair, Vanity Fair.'" *Vanity Fair* is called a "Novel without a Hero". The two heroines are Rebecca Sharp, the impersonation of intellect without heart, and Amelia Sedley, who has heart without intellect. Becky Sharp, the selfish, prudent, brave woman, who wins her way without friend or helper, is highly entertaining, while the kind-hearted and most lovable Amelia is rather insipid.

Esmond, a tale of the time of Queen Anne, is considered the best of Thackeray's writings. *The Virginians* is the history of the grandsons of Esmond. In *Pendennis* Thackeray describes his own youthful struggles as an author. *The Newcomes* is perhaps the most popular of his novels, and Colonel Newcome is probably a picture of the author himself.

15. Edward Bulwer, Lord Lytton.

Born 1803. — Died 1873.

Bulwer was one of the most voluminous and most versatile authors of his day. He was a novelist, a poet, a dramatist, a historian, and an essayist. His best-known play is *The Lady of Lyons;* his most celebrated domestic novel is *The Caxtons.*

Bulwer has written four great historical novels. In *The Last Days of Pompeii* he gives an account of the destruction of that city by an eruption of Mount Vesuvius. *Harold, the Last of the Saxon Kings of England*, refers to the time of William

the Conqueror and contains an account of the battle of Hastings. *The Last of the Barons* is the Earl of Warwick, surnamed the "Kingmaker", who lived at the time of the Wars of the Roses. *Rienzi, the Last of the Tribunes,* gives an account of the Rome of the middle ages and her struggles for liberty.

16. George Eliot.

Born 1819. — Died 1880.

George Eliot is the name assumed for literary purposes by Mary Ann Evans, one of the greatest of English novelists. In the power of picturing the growth of character from the ordinary experiences of everyday life no one approaches her. She was born in Warwickshire, the county of Shakespeare, in 1819. Her father was a land agent who had once been a carpenter, and his simple but noble nature is reproduced in *Adam Bede*. This book, which is the first of George Eliot's great novels, appeared in 1850. She now devoted her whole life to literature, and published many novels, essays, and poems. Some of her best novels, in which she places "clear images before our gladdened eyes," are *Silas Marner, Middlemarch,* and *Romola.*

The Mill on the Floss is considered George Eliot's masterpiece. In the character and history of Maggie Tulliver, child, girl, and woman, we are allowed to see something of the writer herself and of the things "sad, high, and working," which formed the element of her life. The story is briefly this: Tom and Maggie Tulliver were the children of the miller at Dorlcote on the Floss. After a

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happy and careless childhood they were suddenly thrown upon the world by the ruin and death of their father. Some years passed away, their old affection had been estranged by an unhappy accident, and they lived apart. Suddenly a flood rose in the valley of the Floss, threatening to sweep away the mill where Tom Tulliver lived. Maggie rose at midnight, took a boat, and rowed at the peril of her own life up the swollen river to rescue her only brother. Tom stepped into Maggie's boat, which was soon in the current of the river; but some huge wooden fragments were floated along, making a wide mass across the stream, and, the sun rising at this moment, they saw death rushing upon them:

"'It is coming, Maggie!' Tom said, in a deep, hoarse voice, loosing the oars, and clasping her. The next instant the boat was no longer seen upon the water — and the huge mass was hurrying on in hideous triumph.

"The boat reappeared — but brother and sister had gone down in an embrace never to be parted: living through again, in one supreme moment, the days when they had clasped their little hands in love, and roamed the daisied fields together."

17. Charles Kingsley.

Born 1819. — Died 1875.

Charles Kingsley, an eloquent preacher and brilliant writer, was for many years rector of Eversley, a village in Hampshire. In 1860 he was appointed Professor of Modern History at Cambridge, and afterwards he became Canon of Westminster.

His best-known poems are *The Three Fishers*, *Mary, call the cattle home*, and *My fairest child, I have no song to give you.*

Kingsley has written many beautiful novels, the greatest of which are *Hypatia* and *Westward Ho!* a story of the days of Queen Elizabeth. In this romance he introduces the great heroes of Devonshire — Drake, Raleigh, Hawkins, and others, and describes the adventures of these heroes in the Spanish Main and South America and the defeat of the Spanish Armada, which he calls "Britain's Salamis".

The novel *Two Years Ago* refers to the days of the Crimean War.

18. George Meredith.

Born 1828. — Died 1909.

George Meredith, the "Prose Browning", was born at Portsmouth and educated at Neuwied on the Rhine. His first great novel, *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel*, was published in 1859, in the same year as George Eliot's *Adam Bede*; but it was not till the publication of *Diana of the Crossways*, twenty-five years later, that his power as a novelist was widely recognized. He resembles Browning not only in his condensed style, full of thought but sometimes obscure, but also in this respect — that he worked for years without much apparent success, and after much of his best work was published and seemingly forgotten slowly won the leading place in English fiction.

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Among the best of Meredith's novels are *Evan Harrington*, *The Adventures of Harry Richmond*, and *The Egoist*.

19. Thomas Hardy.

Born 1840.

Thomas Hardy is an eminent painter of rural life in England. He is "a peasant and a woodlander", a student and a thinker. Some of his most famous novels are *Under the Greenwood Tree*, *The Hand of Ethelberta*, *The Woodlanders*, and *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*. *Wessex Tales* and *Life's Little Ironies* are collections of short stories and sketches.

In 1909 Hardy published *Time's Laughing-stocks*, a collection of poems covering a period of nearly fifty years.

20. Robert Louis Stevenson.

Born 1850. — Died 1894.

Robert Louis Stevenson was born in Edinburgh and educated at the University of his native town. From childhood he was very delicate, and his life was a heroic struggle against illness. A tour in a canoe led to the publication of his first book, *An Inland Voyage*. *Treasure Island*, a boy's book, which was written in a sanatorium in Switzerland, was his first great success. His novels *The Black Arrow*, *Kidnapped*, &c. mark a return to the pure romanticism of Sir Walter Scott.

Stevenson was a great traveller. In 1890 he emigrated to Samoa, endearing himself to the

inhabitants of the island by his gentleness and humanity. He died at Vailima, Samoa, and was buried "under the wide and starry sky", on the summit of a mountain near his home. His poems were published in two volumes, *A Child's Garden of Verses* and *Underwoods*.

Requiem.

"Under the wide and starry sky,
Dig the grave, and let me lie.
Glad did I live and gladly die,
And I laid me down with a will.

"This be the verse you grave for me:
Here he lies where he longed to be;
Home is the sailor, home from sea,
And the hunter home from the hill."

21. Rudyard Kipling.

Born 1865.

Rudyard Kipling, the "Poet Laureate of Greater Britain", was born at Bombay in 1865. For several years he was assistant editor of the *Military Gazette* in India; then he travelled through China, Japan, America, Africa, and Australasia.

Kipling is the author of numerous powerfully realistic sketches of Anglo-Indian life, such as *Plain Tales from the Hills*, *Soldiers Three*, and *Wee Willie Winkie*.

The two *Jungle Books* consist of stories in which animals speak and act like human beings. A critic says of these books:

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"Kipling's creatures speak and move not as men, but yet as things akin to man. We feel with Browning:

'*God made all the creatures, and gave them our love and our fear,*
To give sign we and they are his children — one family here.'"

The Seven Seas and *The Five Nations* are patriotic lyrics and ballads. The poem *Recessional*, published at the time of the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria, in 1897, was afterwards inserted in *The Five Nations*. This is the first stanza of *Recessional*.

"God of our fathers, known of old, —
Lord of our far-flung battle-line,
Beneath whose awful Hand we hold
Dominion over palm and pine —
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget — lest we forget!"

22. John Ruskin.

Born 1819. — Died 1900.

John Ruskin was the foremost in influence and eloquence of art-critics, and, like his friend Carlyle, a prophet of moral and social reform. He was born in London, the only child of a wealthy wine-merchant. He was carefully educated at home from his earliest years, and sent to Christ Church, Oxford, at the age of eighteen. All through his boyhood, from his fifth year, he travelled much with his parents both at home and abroad; was allowed to read very much what he liked, and chose

Scott and Pope's *Homer* for week-days, reserving *The Pilgrim's Progress* and *Robinson Crusoe* for Sundays. In *Præterita* he tells the story of his youth. He says that he was surrounded with costly works of art, pictures, and illustrated editions of the poets; and, when he went to Oxford, was accompanied by his mother, who lived in the town to be near him. He has characterised his education as having been both "too luxurious and too formal."

The first volume of Ruskin's greatest work, *Modern Painters*, was begun in 1843 as a defence of the artist Turner; but it developed into an essay on art as a true picture of nature "not only in her outward aspect, but in her inward spirit." During the next seventeen years Ruskin produced four more volumes of *Modern Painters*. This great work and the books *The Seven Lamps of Architecture* and *The Stones of Venice* gave him a place in the world of art similar to that held by Matthew Arnold in the world of letters.

From about the year 1860 Ruskin's best efforts were given to ethics and social reform. He said, "I am tormented between the longing for rest and a lovely life, and the sense of the terrific call of human crime for resistance, and of human misery for help." He began to write about questions of wealth and labour, and published his essays with the title *Unto this Last*. The most widely read of his ethical works is *Sesame and Lilies*.

While you have Light.

From the Preface to "Sesame and Lilies".

"God's first order is, 'Work while you have light;' and His second, 'Be merciful while you have mercy.' 'Work while you have light,' especially while you have the light of morning. There are few things more wonderful to me than that old people never tell young ones how precious their youth is. They sometimes sentimentally regret their own earlier days; sometimes prudently forget them; often foolishly rebuke the young, often more foolishly indulge, often more foolishly thwart and restrain; but scarcely ever warn or watch them. Remember, then, that I, at least, have warned *you* that the happiness of your life, and its power, and its part and rank in earth and in heaven, depend on the way you pass your days now. They are not to be sad days: far from that, the first duty of young people is to be delighted and delightful; but they are to be in the deepest sense solemn days. There is no solemnity so deep, to a rightly-thinking creature, as that of dawn."

23. Thomas Carlyle.

Born 1795. — Died 1881.

Thomas Carlyle has exercised in the nineteenth century the same kind of influence that Johnson did in the eighteenth, but a wider and a deeper one. As Johnson was surrounded by Goldsmith, Gibbon, and Reynolds, and others who loved and reverenced him, so Carlyle had his circle of admirers — Browning and Ruskin, the greatest of English art-critics, Emerson*), an

*) When Emerson paid a visit to Carlyle at Craigenputtock, Carlyle wrote to one of his friends, "His visit is like the visit of an angel."

American essayist, Charles Dickens, and many others.

Carlyle was born in the little village of Ecclefechan in Annandale, Dumfriesshire, in December 1795, a few months before Robert Burns passed away. His father, James Carlyle, was a mason and peasant farmer, a man of little education, but of remarkable natural endowments and force of character. His son's love and reverence for him find a very beautiful expression in the *Memoir of James Carlyle.*

Thomas was sent to Annan Grammar School at the age of nine, and in 1809 he went to the University of Edinburgh, trudging over the eighty miles of hill and dale with a single companion. After leaving the University he became a teacher of mathematics, first in his old school at Annan, and afterwards at Kirkcaldy in Fife, where the famous preacher Edward Irving became his friend. He says, "Irving was a brother to me and a friend such as I never had again or before in this world." In 1824 he paid a visit to Irving in London, and his friend, who was then at the height of his own success, said, "You will see now, one day we two will shake hands across the brook, you as first in literature, I as first in divinity, and people will say, 'Both these fellows are from Annandale. Where is Annandale?'"

In the same year Carlyle paid a short visit to Paris, and saw, with the keen eyes which missed nothing and forgot nothing, the scenery

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of the great drama of the Revolution. Next year he was back in Scotland, and was busy with the translation of *German Romance* and *Wilhelm Meister*.

In 1826 he married Jane Welsh, who had been the brightest and best of Irving's pupils. Mrs. Carlyle was herself a woman of genius, and in her letters she gives the brightest and wittiest picture of their life after they came to London.

The young couple settled at Craigenputtock, a small farm belonging to Mrs. Carlyle, which is fourteen miles from Dumfries in a wilderness of rock and heath. In this hilly solitude Carlyle meditated and wrote his great work *Sartor Resartus* (the Tailor Re-tailored). The second title of the book is *The Life and Opinions of Herr Teufelsdröckh of Weissnichtwo.* In form a review of a German work on dress, it is in reality a philosophical essay. By the mouth of the German professor Carlyle inveighs against the old clothes of falsehood and fashion that conceal the divine idea lying in the centre of human life. The most interesting part of this work is the second book, which is in a sense autobiographical. The beautiful maiden Blumine, who is mentioned in it, is said to have been Margaret Gordon, a Highland lady, poor and proud, but beautiful and good. In later years she and Carlyle met, but as strangers, in London, "on horseback both of us, and meeting in the gate of Hyde Park, when her eyes (but that was

all) said to me almost touchingly, 'Yes, yes, that is you.'"

So strange were the ideas in *Sartor Resartus*, and so grotesque was the style, that London publishers could not be induced to accept the manuscript, and the work could find its way to the public only through the pages of *Fraser's Magazine*.

At length Carlyle wearied of the solitude of Craigenputtock, and he removed with his wife to London, and settled in Cheyne Row, in the house which was to be Carlyle's for nearly fifty years to come. Here, during the next two years, he wrote his great prose poem, the *History of the French Revolution*, perhaps the most perfect of all his works.

The lectures on *Heroes and Hero-Worship* were published in 1840. The book is divided into six chapters: *The Hero as Divinity: Odin; — the Hero as Prophet: Mahomet; — the Hero as Poet: Dante, Shakespeare; — the Hero as Priest: Luther, Knox; — the Hero as Man of Letters: Johnson, Rousseau, Burns; — the Hero as King: Cromwell, Napoleon.*

The Letters and Speeches of Oliver Cromwell were published five years after, and *The History of Friedrich II., commonly called the Great*, was Carlyle's last great work.

In 1866 he accepted the invitation to be Lord Rector of Edinburgh University, and many men now living remember his speech as the grandest they ever listened to. While resting peacefully

with his relations in Dumfries, during the next few days, he received the news of his wife's sudden death, and "the light of his life was gone out." He was surrounded by friends who loved and honoured him; but life was a weary burden, and he passed away in February 1881.

Familiar quotations from Carlyle's works:

"The eternal stars shine out again, as soon as it is dark enough."

"For suffering and enduring there is no remedy but striving and doing."

"Blessed is he who has found his work, let him ask no other blessedness."

"All true men are soldiers in the same army, to do battle against the same enemy — the empire of darkness and wrong."

"Every noble crown is, and on earth will ever be, a crown of thorns."

24. Thomas Babington Macaulay.

Born 1800. — Died 1859.

Macaulay was born on the 25th of October 1800 — the anniversary of Agincourt, as he was fond of saying — at Rothley Temple in Leicestershire. His father, Zachary Macaulay, was a merchant and a well-known philanthropist. When a young man he was manager of an estate in Jamaica; but he threw up the post on account of his horror of slavery. He afterwards acted as the agent of an English company for the settlement of liberated slaves at Sierra Leone on the west coast of Africa. Having settled in London as secretary of that company, he married in 1799, and Thomas

Babington was his first-born son. Little Tom Macaulay was one of the brightest and cleverest children whose history was ever written. From the age of three he read constantly, and he had so marvellous a memory that he had difficulty in forgetting anything he ever read or heard. His labours as a historian began in the nursery; before he was eight years old he wrote a Compendium of Universal History, giving, his mother said, "a tolerably connected view of the leading events from the creation to the present time."

At eighteen Macaulay went to Cambridge and entered on a brilliant career. Twice he gained the Chancellor's gold medal for English poetry, and in the Union Debating Society he was one of the best orators. While preparing for his call to the bar he achieved his first literary triumph; his brilliant essay on *Milton* appeared in the *Edinburgh Review*, and it was at once felt that a new writer of great and varied powers had arisen. Five years later he entered the House of Commons, and his speech in favour of Parliamentary Reform won warm praises even from opponents. "Portions of the speech," said Sir Robert Peel, "were as beautiful as anything I have ever heard or read. It reminded one of the old times."

In 1833 Macaulay was elected a member of the Supreme Council of India, and he spent the next five years at Calcutta. In 1838 he was home again, and paid a visit to Italy, and shortly afterwards wrote his beautiful and stirring *Lays of Ancient Rome*. He then prepared a collected edition

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of the *Essays* he had contributed to the Edinburgh Review. Soon after he began his greatest work, the *History of England from the Accession of James the Second*. He said, "I hope to produce something which shall for a few days supersede the last fashionable novel on the tables of young ladies." The success of the work was such as had never been known before, and his hopes were more than realized.

Macaulay withdrew from the House of Commons in 1856. In the following year he was raised to the peerage with the title of Baron Macaulay of Rothley; but he only wore the coronet for little more than two years; and though he took his seat in the House of Lords he never spoke there. Lord Macaulay died in 1859, and was buried in Westminster Abbey.

Macaulay's *Critical and Historical Essays* are mainly concerned with English history and English thought during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the same period of which his *History* treats. The essays on Lord Clive, who, at the time of the Seven Years' War, founded the British Empire in India; on Warren Hastings, Clive's successor as Governor-General of India; on John Hampden, one of the champions of English liberty at the time of the Civil Wars; on William Pitt, called the "Elder Pitt" or the "Great Commoner", and on Frederick the Great, are perhaps the best-known of his historical essays. Some of his critical essays are on Milton, Bunyan, Addison, Johnson, Byron, and on the first book published, in 1839,

by Mr. Gladstone, the well-known statesman, who died in 1898.

Macaulay's *History of England from the Accession of James II.* has been called "a grand prose epic, with William III. as hero, and the establishment of representative government as dénouement." The following extract describes the arrival of William of Orange at Exeter in 1688:

"Surrounded by a goodly company of gentlemen and pages, the Prince's banner was borne aloft. On its broad folds the crowd which covered the roofs and filled the windows read with delight that memorable inscription, 'The Protestant Religion, and the Liberties of England.' But the acclamations redoubled when, attended by forty running footmen, the Prince himself appeared, armed on back and breast, wearing a white plume, and mounted on a white charger. With how martial an air he curbed his horse, how thoughtful and commanding was the expression of his ample forehead and falcon eye, may still be seen on the canvas of Kneller. Once those grave features relaxed into a smile. It was when an ancient woman, perhaps one of the zealous Puritans who, through twenty-eight years of persecution, had waited with firm faith for the consolation of Israel, perhaps the mother of some rebel who had perished in the carnage of Sedgemoor, or in the more fearful carnage of the Bloody Circuit, broke from the crowd, rushed through the drawn swords and curvetting horses, touched the hand of the deliverer, and cried out that now she was happy."

25. James Anthony Froude.

Born 1818. — Died 1894.

Froude, the trusted friend and literary executor of Carlyle, was born at Darlington in Devonshire

in 1818. His chief work is *A History of England from the Fall of Wolsey to the Defeat of the Spanish Armada,* which gives wonderfully vivid pictures of the persons and the incidents of those eventful times. Shortly after Carlyle's death, in 1881, Froude edited the two volumes of his *Reminiscences,* and published his *Life of Carlyle.* He has also published a collection of essays entitled *Short Studies on Great Subjects.*

XII. American Literature in the Nineteenth Century.

"Irving was the first ambassador whom the New World of letters sent to the Old." In these words Thackeray happily described the proud position of Washington Irving in English literature. That literature is one, whether the works composing it are produced in England, in America, or in Australia. Irving was undoubtedly the first American writer who was recognized as worthy of a place among the Great Authors of English Literature, and he was followed by others whose works are as familiar to the English as to the Americans — by Longfellow, Poe, Bryant, Hawthorne, Emerson, Cooper, Whittier, Holmes, Lowell, Prescott, Motley, Bret Harte, Mark Twain, and others. As the representatives of these New England authors, we take Irving, Emerson, Hawthorne, Longfellow, Poe, Prescott, Motley, Bret Harte, and Mark Twain.

1. Washington Irving.

Born 1783. — Died 1859.

Washington Irving, whose style has the charm of Addison and Goldsmith, is one of the

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most popular American authors. He was born in New York in 1783, when the American War of Independence was just over, and Washington was hailed as the Father of his country; and the future author of the *Sketch Book* was one of the children who received the name of the national hero. In 1804 he visited Europe and spent two years in travelling through England, France, and Italy. Soon after he published the *History of New York*, professedly written by Dietrich Knickerbocker, a Dutchman. New York was then a comparatively small place, and many of the people were descended from the original Dutch settlers, whose quaint manners and customs they retained. Of these Irving had been a close observer, and he describes them with great zest and drollery in this book. In the preface the author mentions with quaint humour the causes which led him to write it: "[If I do not write this history] the origin of our city will be buried in eternal oblivion, and even the names and achievements of Wouter Van Twiller, William Kieft, and Peter Stuyvesant, be enveloped in doubt and fiction, like those of Romulus and Remus, of Charlemagne, King Arthur, Rinaldo, and Godfrey of Bouillon."

In 1815 Washington Irving again visited Europe, and did not return to America till 1832. He was warmly welcomed by Scott, Moore, Campbell, and other authors, and one of his pleasantest books is *Recollections of Newstead and Abbotsford*, which he published soon after his return to America. The first book written in England is the *Sketch*

Book of Geoffrey Crayon, which gives interesting pictures of country life in England during the beginning of the past century. A very pleasant part of the book is an account of an Old English Christmas spent at Bracebridge Hall. There are also several American sketches, such as *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow* and the story of *Rip van Winkle*, one of the Dutch colonists of New York, who met the ghosts of Hendrick Hudson, the first discoverer of the river Hudson, and his crew, and, after tasting of the liquor belonging to that ghostly company, fell into a deep sleep, which lasted for twenty years, though they seemed to him but one night. Meanwhile the War of the Revolution had taken place, and Rip, who had fallen asleep a loyal subject of King George III., awoke a free citizen of the United States of America.

The *Sketch Book* was published in England and in America; it was at once successful, and the author of *Rip van Winkle* was recognized as an English classic. His next works were *Bracebridge Hall*, which is thoroughly English, both in its scenes and in its humour, and *Tales of a Traveller*.

Irving spent several years in Spain, was greatly interested in Spanish literature, and wrote *The Life of Columbus*, *The Conquest of Granada*, and *The Alhambra*, which is a sketch book of the Moorish Kingdom of Granada. In 1842 he was appointed, by the President of the United States, ambassador to Spain. On his return to America he built for himself a pleasant home at Sunnyside

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on the Hudson near his own "Sleepy Hollow". He died in 1859.

2. Ralph Waldo Emerson.

Born 1803. — Died 1882.

Ralph Waldo Emerson, the "American Carlyle", was born in Boston. He entered Harvard at the age of fourteen, and, after passing through the usual course there, studied for the ministry, to which he was ordained in 1827. Five years later he visited Europe, where he met many eminent men and formed a life-long friendship with Carlyle. On his return he settled at Concord near Boston and took up lecturing.

Emerson was a philosopher and moralist, an original thinker and writer. Some of his great books are *Nature, A Book of Essays, Representative Men*, and *English Traits.* Louisa May Alcott, who spent the happiest years of her childhood at Concord, says, "Emerson remained my beloved Master while he lived, doing more for me, as for many another young soul, than he ever knew, by the simple beauty of his life, the truth and wisdom of his books, the example of a good, great man untempted and unspoiled by the world, which he made nobler while in it, and left the richer when he went."

3. Nathaniel Hawthorne.

Born 1804. — Died 1864.

Nathaniel Hawthorne is undoubtedly the greatest American novelist. At Bowdoin College

he became the friend of Longfellow, and at Concord he lived in an old manse which had formerly been tenanted by Emerson. Here he wrote *Mosses from an Old Manse. Twice Told Tales* and *The Snow Image* are collections of short stories. The novel *The Scarlet Letter* is Hawthorne's most powerful work. The last of his books published during his lifetime was *Our Old Home*, notes on England and the English.

4. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

Born 1807. — Died 1882.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow was born in 1807 at Portland on the coast of Maine, "the beautiful town that is seated by the sea." On the mother's side he was descended from John Alden and Priscilla, the Puritan maiden, the hero and heroine of his poem *The Courtship of Miles Standish.* The boyhood of the poet was very happy, it was spent chiefly in and about his native town, and for its quiet life and its lovely surroundings his strong affection continued all through life. He was very fond of reading, and the book which he loved above all others was the *Sketch Book* of Washington Irving. In after years he said, "The old fascination remains about it, and whenever I open its pages I open also that mysterious door which leads back into the haunted chamber of youth."

At the early age of fifteen Longfellow entered Bowdoin College at Brunswick, twenty-five miles from Portland. He said to his mother, "Whatever

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I study I ought to be engaged in with all my soul, for I will be eminent in something." One of his class-mates was Nathaniel Hawthorne, with whom he speedily formed an acquaintance which was to ripen into a life-long friendship. When he was nineteen years of age he was offered a professorship of modern languages in his own college; and, to qualify himself for his work, he spent three years and a half in travelling in France, Spain, Italy, Germany, and England. He met Washington Irving in Madrid. In 1829 he returned to America and entered on his professorial duties with enthusiasm and confidence in his powers. His intercourse with the students was perfectly simple, frank, and manly. They always left him not only with admiration, but guided, helped, and inspired.

In 1835 Longfellow was appointed Professor of Modern Languages at Harvard University in Cambridge, Massachusetts — the foremost seat of learning in America. He again visited Europe, accompanied by his young wife. In England he was welcomed by many friends, and among others by Mr. and Mrs. Carlyle. He then visited Sweden to learn the northern languages, and afterwards he went to Holland. Here a great sorrow cast its shadow on his young life, for his wife died at Rotterdam. He went sadly on to Rhineland and Switzerland, and was back again in America at the end of 1836. For the remainder of his life Cambridge was to be his home.

In 1839 Longfellow published his first considerable poem, *A Psalm of Life*, and the prose romance *Hyperion*, which tells the story of his own wanderings through the beautiful Rhineland, and contains delightful sketches of Goethe and Richter. Longfellow's first volumes of songs and ballads contain such well-known favourites as *The Reaper and the Flowers*, *The Open Window*, *Excelsior*, *The Village Blacksmith*, and *The Wreck of the Hesperus*.

The third visit Longfellow paid to Europe is chiefly memorable on account of the *Poems on Slavery*, which he wrote on board ship during the homeward journey. At Marienberg on the Rhine he spent a quiet but pleasant summer at a water-cure establishment, where he made acquaintance with Freiligrath, and formed a cordial friendship with him. In October he passed some delightful days in London as the guest of Dickens, whose acquaintance he had made in America. Not long after his return to Harvard he married his second wife, Frances Appleton.

In 1847 he published what is perhaps his masterpiece, the poem *Evangeline, a Tale of Acadie*. *The Courtship of Miles Standish*, which appeared soon after, is written in English hexameters, like Evangeline. It is a tale of the "Old Colony days", when the Pilgrim Fathers, who went to America in the Mayflower in 1620, founded the village of Plymouth, the first settlement in New England. Two new volumes of verse entitled *The Seaside and the Fireside* and *Birds of Passage* were then

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published. — *The Golden Legend*, Longfellow's next work, is a dramatic poem, the hero of which is Prince Henry, whose story Hartmann von der Aue has told in *Der arme Heinrich*. In the preface he says "I have called this poem the '*Golden Legend*' because the story upon which it is founded exhibits, amid the corruptions of the Middle Ages, the virtue of disinterestedness and self-sacrifice, and the power of faith, hope, and charity, sufficient for all the exigencies of life and death."

The Song of Hiawatha, a masterpiece which is worthy to rank with *Evangeline*, appeared in 1855. It is an idealised picture of Indian life. "This Indian Edda — if I may so call it — is founded on a tradition prevalent among the North American Indians of a personage of miraculous birth, who was sent among them to clear their rivers, forests, and fishing-grounds, and to teach them the arts of peace. The scene of the poem is among the Ojibways on the southern shore of Lake Superior." Hiawatha — the Prophet —, the son of the West Wind, was brought up by his grandmother Nokomis. He married Minnehaha, Laughing Water, who lived in the land of the Dacotahs, and brought her to the wigwam of Nokomis:

"Pleasant was the journey homeward,
All the birds sang loud and sweetly
Songs of happiness and heart's ease.
From the sky the sun benignant
Looked upon them through the branches,
Saying to them, 'O my children,

Love is sunshine, hate is shadow,
Life is checkered shade and sunshine;
Rule by love, O Hiawatha!'
From the sky the moon looked at them,
Filled the lodge with mystic splendours,
Whispered to them, 'O my children,
Day is restless, night is quiet,
Man imperious, woman feeble;
Half is mine, although I follow;
Rule by patience, Laughing Water!'
Thus it was they journeyed homeward;
Thus it was that Hiawatha
To the lodge of old Nokomis
Brought the moonlight, starlight, firelight,
Brought the sunshine of his people,
Minnehaha, Laughing Water."

In 1861 Longfellow had to encounter the second overwhelming sorrow of his life in the tragic death of his wife, who was burned in his house at Harvard. That event saddened him, but did not extinguish his poetic power; in work he found refuge from his sorrow, and by and by he gave the world his *Tales of a Wayside Inn*, seven stories which are supposed to be told by a group of friends,

"Who from the far-off noisy town
Had to the wayside inn come down
To rest beneath its old oak-trees."

On the fiftieth anniversary of his graduation, in 1875, he read, at his old college in Brunswick, the beautiful poem *Morituri Salutamus*, which ends with the characteristic verse:

"For age is opportunity no less
Than youth itself, though in another dress,

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> And as the evening twilight fades away,
> The sky is filled with stars, invisible by day."

Longfellow died at Harvard in 1882. No poet was ever more beloved than he, none was ever more worthy of love. "Never have I known a more beautiful character," says the poet Lowell. "His poetry is a gospel of goodwill set to music, it has carried 'sweetness and light' to thousands of homes."

5. Evangeline.

The story of *Evangeline* is founded on a painful occurrence which took place in North America in the eighteenth century. In 1713 Acadia, or as it is now named, Nova Scotia, was ceded to Great Britain by the French. Some time after this, war having again broken out between the French and the British in Canada, the Acadians were accused of having assisted their countrymen, the French, with provisions and ammunition. Therefore the English government ordered the Acadians to be removed from their homes, and dispersed throughout the other English colonies in North America. The governor of the colony informed the inhabitants that their lands, tenements, and cattle of all kinds were forfeited to the British crown, and that he had orders to remove them in several vessels to the distant colonies. When the people of the Acadian village of Grandpré embarked, Evangeline, the heroine of Longfellow's poem, was separated from her lover Gabriel Lajeunesse. For many years the lovers sought each other, but in vain.

Evangeline went to the prairies on the shores of the Mississippi, to the Far West, "where the mountains lift, through perpetual snows, their lofty and luminous summits," then to the forests on the Lakes of St. Lawrence, where Gabriel had gone to hunt the bison and beaver.

> "When over weary ways, by long and perilous marches,
> She had attained at length the depths of the Michigan forests,
> Found she the hunter's lodge deserted and fallen to ruin."

At length, after many wanderings, she became a Sister of Mercy in Philadelphia, and here, in the almshouse, the home of the homeless, she found her lover, now old and weary and worn. He too recognised her, but he was too weak even to whisper her name:

> "Vainly he strove to rise; and Evangeline, kneeling beside him,
> Kissed his dying lips, and laid his head on her bosom.
> Sweet was the light of his eyes; but it suddenly sank into darkness,
> As when a lamp is blown out by a gust of wind at a casement.
>
> "All was ended now, the hope and the fear and the sorrow,
> All the aching of heart, the restless, unsatisfied longing,
> All the dull, deep pain, and constant anguish of patience.
> And, as she pressed once more the lifeless head to her bosom,
> Meekly she bowed her own, and murmured, 'Father, I thank thee!'"

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6. Edgar Allan Poe.

Born 1809. — Died 1849.

Edgar Allan Poe was born in Boston, Massachusetts. His father and mother were actors, and they both died when Edgar was but two years old. He was adopted by a Mrs. Allan, the wife of a Scotch merchant in Richmond, who had no children of her own and grew passionately fond of the precocious and beautiful boy, while her husband did not care for the child. Edgar was sent to a school in England at the age of seven years, and ten years later he entered the University of Virginia. After the death of Mrs. Allan, Poe, who grew up a wild, reckless youth and frequently brought discredit on himself and his patron, quarrelled with Mr. Allan, and being now dependent on his own efforts, he turned to literature. For two years he lived with an aunt at Baltimore, whose daughter Virginia he afterwards married. The early death of his wife helped to darken the melancholy which pervades nearly all his work. He died in 1849, the victim of misery and sorrow, caused by his incapacity to restrain himself from drink.

Poe is one of the most musical of modern poets. His best-known poems are *The Raven* and *Ulalume*, and his best story is *The Fall of the House of Usher*. The poems *To One in Paradise* and *Annabel Lee* seem especially to be reminiscences of his dead wife.

7. William Hickling Prescott.

Born 1796. — Died 1859.

Prescott, who was born at Salem in Massachusetts, was educated at Harvard, where one of his eyes was blinded by a piece of bread thrown at him in sport by a fellow-student, while the other became so weak that he had to give up his studies. He now set out on his travels, and visited England, France, Italy, and Spain. On his return to America he resolved to give himself to the study of history. His eyesight was too feeble to enable him to read, and he had to rely upon the reading of others; and, though he himself wrote, he could not read his own manuscript. In spite of these heavy obstacles he wrote a noble series of historical works, *Ferdinand and Isabella*, *The Conquest of Mexico*, *The Conquest of Peru*, and *Philip the Second.*

8. John Lothrop Motley.

Born 1814. — Died 1877.

Motley, who has been called the "Macaulay of America", was born in Massachusetts and educated at Harvard. He continued his studies at the University of Göttingen, where he was the comrade and fellow-lodger of Prince Bismarck. "There we lived," writes the Prince, "in the closest intimacy, sharing meals and out-door exercise."

Motley spent many years in ransacking libraries and State archives for the materials of his great work, *The Rise of the Dutch Republic.* It is a noble theme, and he has nobly worked it out.

The book is filled with stirring incidents, as vividly described as those of Macaulay's history, while Motley is far happier in his choice of a subject. The birth of a nation and the gallant casting off the yoke of the masters of the Old and New World is a subject that will never cease to be interesting.

The third part of the book, entitled *Alva*, is of most tragical interest, and gives a picture, terrible in its truth, of human endurance and inhuman ferocity.

"Alva, after nearly six years' experience, had found this 'people-of butter' less malleable than even those 'iron people' whom he boasted of having tamed. It was seen that neither the skies of Greece or Italy, nor the sublime scenery of Switzerland, were necessary to arouse the spirit of defiance to foreign oppression — a spirit which beat as proudly among the wintry mists and the level meadows of Holland as it had ever done under sunnier atmospheres and in more romantic lands."

9. Francis Bret Harte.

Born 1839. — Died 1902.

Francis Bret Harte was born in Albany, New York. His father died early, and after a few years' schooling of a very elementary nature, the boy went to California with his mother. He had a varied career as a teacher, miner, and journalist, and it is as a realistic chronicler of the gold-fields in California that his greatest literary triumphs were achieved. He may be said to have created a special kind of short story in his Californian tales and prose idyls. Some of his most popular books are *Idyls of the Foothills*, *Drift from Two Shores*, and *Thankful Blossom*.

10. Mark Twain.

Born 1835. — Died 1910.

Samuel Langhorne Clemens (Mark Twain) was born at Hannibal, Missouri, in 1835, and, after serving an apprenticeship to the printing business in his brother's office there, "learned the river" Mississippi as a pilot. In this profession he borrowed the phrase which became his pen name from the river custom of crying the soundings, "Mark one! Mark twain! Mark three!" &c. His first attempts in journalism were made in Nevada. Afterwards he was connected with various newspapers in San Francisco, and visited the Sandwich Islands as correspondent of one of them. His earliest book, *The Innocents Abroad*, was the result of his experience and observations as a passenger of the "Quaker City" in her cruise to the Holy Land. *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* is a great favourite in America and Europe, and so is *A Tramp Abroad*, which is an account of a trip through Germany and Switzerland.

"Mark Twain possessed, in a rare degree, the capacity of exciting mirth and lightening the load all mortals have to bear. He was greatly beloved, and to say that the famous American humorist's name is a household word is to speak the literal truth."

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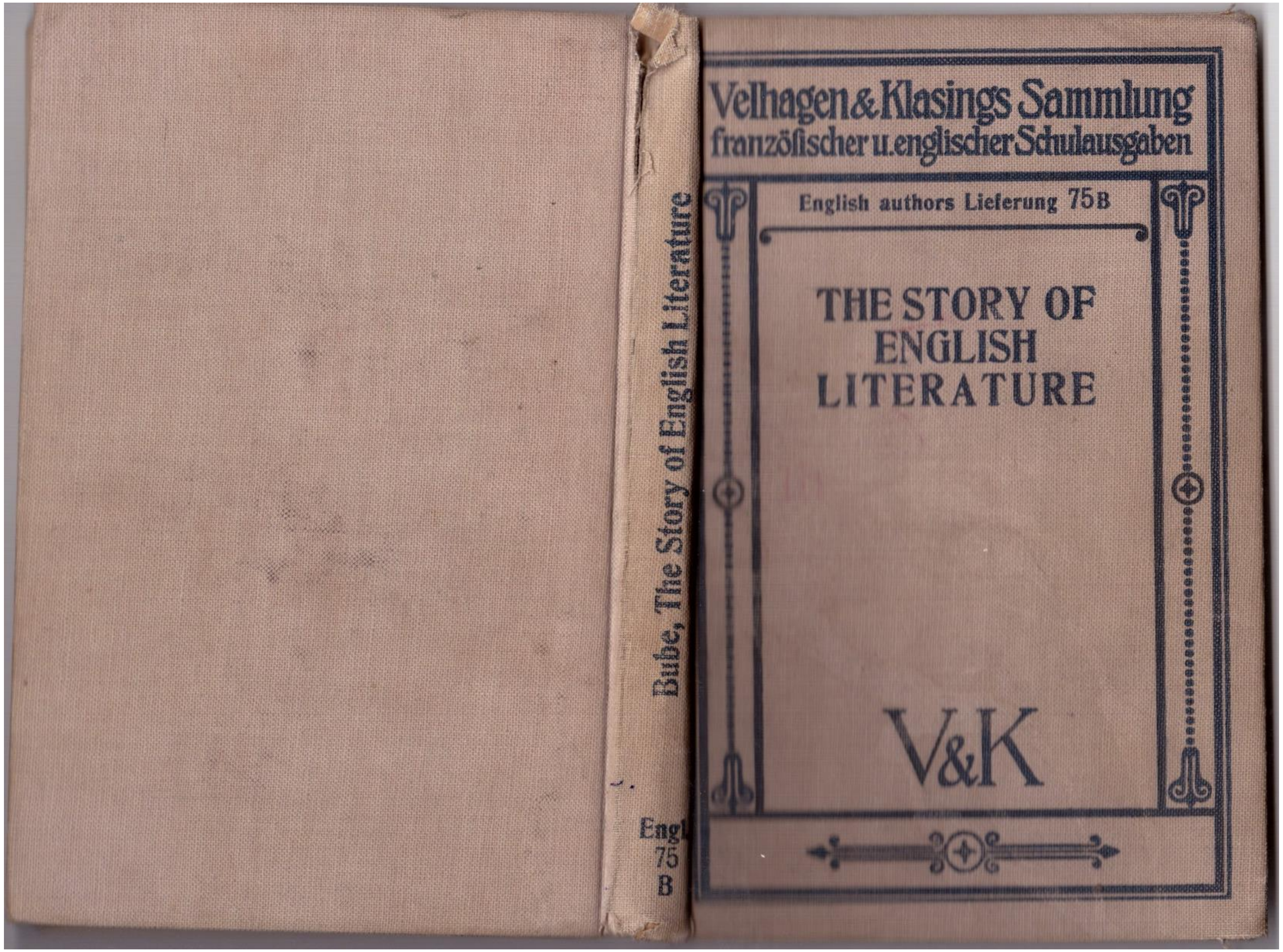
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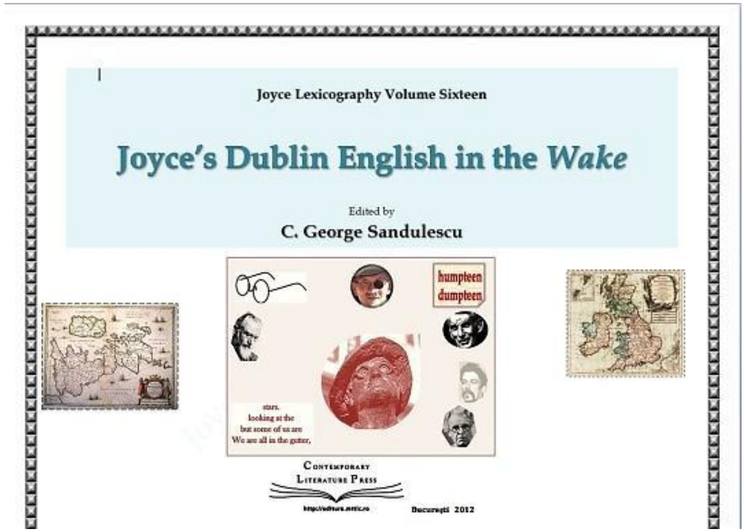
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If you want to have all the information you need about ***Finnegans Wake***, including the full text of *Finnegans Wake* line-numbered, go to the personal site **Sandulescu Online**, at the following internet address: http://sandulescu.perso.monaco.mc/







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